

COBALT-SERIES

谷  
瑞恵

# 伯爵と妖精

涙の秘密をおしえて

集英社



### アーミン

エドガーの従者でレイヴンの姉。一度は命を落とすが、アザラシ妖精として甦り、再びエドガーに仕える。

### ユリシス

エドガーの宿敵プリンスの側近。一見15、6の少年に見えるが正体は不明。妖精をあつかう力を持ち、青騎士伯爵の称号を得たエドガーを敵視している。

### レイヴン

エドガーの従者で、神秘的な雰囲気のある少年。武術は相当な腕を持ち、主人には完璧に忠実。

### ニコ

猫の姿をした妖精。リディアの幼なじみで相棒。ふてぶてしい性格だが、身なりや食事にうるさく、紳士を気取っている。



### リディア

妖精の姿が見え、話もできる少女。エドガーが伯爵となるのを助けた縁で妖精博士として雇われ、さらに、わけあってエドガーと形だけの婚約を交わす。エドガーの真意がつかめないまま、揺れる気持ちを見つめ直すため、休暇をとって故郷に帰るが…。

### エドガー

貴族の家に生まれたが、プリンス率いる謎の組織に売り飛ばされ、苛酷な運命を経た後に、リディアの協力で青騎士伯爵の地位を手に入れる。冷酷にプリンスへの復讐を企む一方で、すぐにリディアをあまい言葉で口説く。

# 伯爵と妖精

【登場人物紹介】

# Chapter 1 - The anxiety of being apart

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Dear beloved Lydia,

Yesterday, there was quite the snow that fell in London.

From early morning, there were carriage accidents happening here and there, and it was quite an interesting sight to see all the number of people who were falling over in front of the mansion.

The Thames River has also completely frozen over and it's filled with people who are enjoying skating.

When I see people who are holding hands and skating so joyfully, I can't help but imagine how it would be if you were here.

Since the Christmas season is one where you spend time with family, I can imagine that you are spending your holiday peacefully with your father. As I wonder how you are doing, I sincerely wish that one day I would be able to spend Christmas and the new year with you.

It's almost the Twelfth Night.

The Christmas season in London society is considered over already but I won't do the senseless thing and ask when you're coming back.

Since it was a promise that you can spend the holiday as you wish from the start, I don't want you to see me as an employer who works you too hard.

I will restrain back my feelings of wanting to see you immediately and divert my urge by writing you letters.

But in truth, I can't rest in peace. I'm sure you are under the misunderstanding about me and went back to Scotland, and so I was wondering if you still had the intention of returning to London once more.

I'm sure it is quite cold over where you are. I am worried if you might catch a cold.

You always say that you can't trust my words, but I ask if you can believe just one.

Even when apart, I think of you.



Folding the letter back up and putting it away into a small wooden chestnut box, Lydia let out a small sigh.

Ever since she became the fairy doctor of the Earl of Ibrazel, Lord Edgar Ashenbert, it was the first time she was away from him for a long period of time.

She forcibly got a long holiday break and was spending it in Scotland far away from London in her family home near Edinburgh, but Lydia was strangely not able to remain calm.

That must be because there were letters arriving practically every day from Edgar.

He was an earl who didn't hesitate to treat Lydia as his bride-to-be, and she couldn't completely believe his sweet words and she ran away, not know what to do from the fear that she might fall in love with him.

Because he was a renown philanderer who schooled himself with numerous relationships with women. Even with this letter, she didn't how much she could believe it.

But once she read the letter that was sent, Lydia would relax the muscle in her cheeks at just the little happenings in London and feel pain in her chest when she felt Edgar's loneliness of not having any family members, and her heart was wavered by his unusually serious words.

Edgar in the letter gave the impression of sincereness and honesty. He seemed like a totally different person than the Edgar she normally knew as bold and haughty and like a noble, and according to the person become a beautifully handsome malicious devil.

But Edgar had a delicate and lonesome part about him, and because of that Lydia was dragged into living in London and commuting to his estate there and had let it remained that she was his 'fiancée.'

On her left hand, she wore the moonstone 'engagement ring.'

It could only be removed by Edgar and yet she came back home here forgetting she was wearing it.

But still, this moonstone which apparently possessed fae magic was made so that ordinary people wouldn't be able to see by the mining fairy Coblynau who was its caretaker.

So it was able to go unnoticed by her father and the people in the town.

After Lydia's father, who was her only family member had attended a party that was held from New Year's Eve to the New Year, claimed that he wanted to do a geological survey while the university was closed and so was on a trip to Northern Europe.

Lydia, who was left to stay, was in a situation that if she felt like going to London she could leave anytime, but her feelings weren't decided and so she was spending her time slowly.

She stepped away from her desk and approached the window and whipped the fogged glass with the tip of her fingers.

The sky outside was covered with low gray clouds and it appeared like the afternoon was going to approach daybreak from an earlier start.

The glass window that was out to take the open air was frozen over so cold like ice and when it came in contact with the air of the room that was warmed by the hearth, it didn't take any time in becoming clouded again.

When she whipped away the fog one more time, she saw the faint reflection of herself with her reddish-brown hair set to flow down.

Her eyes were a golden-green, and could see fairies that ordinary people could not. Her eyes, which were spurned by the townspeople who also called her a witch, were glaring back at her through the mirror like they were ready to pick a fight.

Because she couldn't believe that it was her that Edgar said he was thinking about in the letter he sent, and so Lydia wasn't able to easily face him heart-to-heart.

"Lydia, are you perhaps waiting for a letter from him?"

The one who appeared in her doorway was a young girl who had her coffee-colored hair carelessly tied up in a ponytail.

"What, oh goodness, Lota, what are you saying? That's impossible."

She rushed to deny it, but Lota still looked apprehensive.

Lota was a former pirate but decided to live in London for a while after meeting her real-life grandfather, but she appeared in Lydia's town a few days ago by herself, saying she wanted to spend some time with her friend.

"But you know, at the same hour of every day, you go and stand by the windowsill. Right when it's time for the mail to arrive."

"Oh, really, I didn't notice."

"Look, it's the postman!"

In a flash, Lydia pushed her cheek against the window, but realized what she was doing when the snickering Lota said "Jus----t kidding."

Turning red, she pouted her cheeks.

"That's mean."

"Sorry, sorry, but it isn't something you should hide."

Lota patted Lydia's shoulder, but she let out another sigh.

"It's just a letter was arriving every day and lately none arrived, so I was a little worried. He might have gotten sick or injured."

The letter Lydia had read earlier was a letter that had arrived a while back.

"Edgar? Sick? Injured? No such thing. More like this is sure to be one of his schemes."

Lota sat herself down on a chair and crossed her legs. Even if she decided to live with her grandfather, she couldn't get rid of the masculine way she carried herself since she used to be a captain of a pirate crew.

"Scheme?"

"He knows that if he stops sending letters then you would get worried. Just like how you are now. So he's trying to lure you to cut your holiday short and return to London."

That made sense. Lota was an old-time acquaintance of Edgar and knew exactly how criminal and flirtatious he was.

I was about to be tricked.

Lydia tried to collect herself and stepped away from the window thinking she wouldn't dare wait for anymore letters.

However, as soon as she heard the ring of the bell used by the post man, she went running out of the room.

She dashed out into the garden and shoved the wooden gate open to get to the mailbox. She saw a white envelope poking its head out and tried to pull it out, but a fluffy haired gray-colored cat snatched it away from her.

“It’s finally here, this is for me.”

“Nico, you write letters?”

Seeing Lydia giving him a look of surprise, the fairy cat standing on his hind legs on top of the post box puffed out his chest arrogantly.

“Writing letters is what gentlemen do.”

He was a fairy who liked to wear neckties and groomed his fur with a comb and walked around copying the gestures of a gentleman.

He was Lydia’s childhood friend and partner, but because he spent so much time with humans he could read and write. Out of all the fairies Lydia knew, he was the most human.

However no matter how he tried to copy, he would always be in the body of a longhaired gray cat, and so the more human he acted, the more strange it appeared.

“Miss Carlton, Mister Nico, would you please listen?”

The voice came from the bushes. The one who stepped out from the leaves was Coblynau. He was a small fairy with a snub nose, unkempt beard and dressed like a coal miner who scurried his way up the fence and starting bouncing up and down when he reached the top.

“It’s an emergency!”

Fairies tended to over-exaggerate. That’s why Lydia decided to prioritize with checking the mailbox than listening to his emergency, but it looked like the letter addressed to Nico was the only one, because nothing was inside.

“Miss, this is in regards to your fiancé the Blue Knight Earl.”

Lydia turned to face Coblynau.

“You know that I’m not Edgar’s real fiancée, right?”

Blue Knight Earl was another name for the Lord of Ibrazel.

However Lydia was not officially engaged with Edgar. It was just the result of a troublesome situation that went terribly wrong, and ever since, Edgar had been treating her as his bride-to-be.

She has been correcting this small fairy repeatedly, but as long as she was wearing the moonstone engagement ring, then Coblynau only saw her as the future wife of the Blue Knight Earl.

“It happens to be that the last Ashenbert earl had appeared in England one-hundred years ago.”

A hundred years ago?

According to the official records, an Ashenbert heir hadn't appeared for three-hundred years.

“Who said that?”

“The white swans at the riverbank. Have you heard that there are small fairies who lives amongst the swans and travel with them?”

Of course she knew there were fairies that travel by riding migrating birds. However, she wouldn't be able to get near wild, cautious birds.

“Their flock had apparently been rescued by the Blue Knight Earl before.”

“Was it really the earl? It could be an imposter from another bloodline,” interrupted Nico.

That could also be true, even if it was believed no living member of the Ashenbert family, an illegitimate bloodline existed. The boy from that illegitimate line was currently at odds with Edgar who had inherited the family title.

“It must be real because they claimed that the Ibrazel army and family banshee were also brought along. Even if that man was born from the earl, someone from the minor bloodline wouldn't be able to do such a thing.”

Lord Blue Knight was a human who governed the fairy kingdom and pledged his loyalty to the King of England who granted him the title of earl.

His descendants came to be known as Blue Knight Earl and possessed estates within England but Ibrazel, a great island believed to be a myth was the earl's main residence and it wouldn't be any surprise if an army existed.

There was a chance for the fairies living with the swans to coincidentally meet the real earl during their travels.

But that would mean the real earl's descendants might be alive somewhere. Or was the earl who appeared one hundred years ago the very last heir?

Then why didn't that individual go and retrieve the sword that was entrusted to the merfolk by the previous earl?

"Coblynau, I would like to meet those fairies."

"Uhh, it seems like they have already departed. They said they would like to meet the earl and his wife, but circumstances did not permit them to wait...."

Like I said I'm not his wife.

She couldn't help but frown into a frustrated look. Instead of Lydia, Nico asked a question.

"What was that circumstance?"

"Well, that was, uh...."

The coblynau looked like it was torture to say.

"Hey, Lydia, I found something great."

Just then, a good-looking young man hopped over the bushes in one leap and landed right in front of Lydia.

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"Wh-what do you want, Kelpie?!"

Kelpie combed back his ruffled black wavy hair with his hand and made a childish smile and released bird feathers to fall down around Lydia.

The sight of the white wing-feathers floating down like gifts from an angel was so romantic that it one couldn't take eyes off it.....

But romance couldn't possibly be staged by this barbaric water horse standing in front of her.

"You ate a swan!"

"I made sure to keep the feathers. Just for you. I remembered how happy you looked when you picked up a feather the other day during your stroll."

That was because the white feather was marvelous.

However there was no mistake that Kelpie ripped these off before he devoured the creature, so she couldn't enjoy such a gift.

The swans would have never guessed that a water-horse lived in the highlands so near Edinburgh. Lydia pitied the birds that lost a dear member of their flock and sighed at the thought of how they were surely miles away in the sky from here as she brushed away the wing feathers stuck on her dress.

Kelpie cheerfully peered down to Lydia with his mouth stuffed with feathers.

“Lydia, wouldn’t you agree that life in Scotland is great. There are so many things to eat and the water is so clean and delicious. Don’t you feel you want to live here forever?”

“You mustn’t Miss, you should not listen to what that unseelie court is saying,” protested Coblynau as he tugged a lock of wavy hair of Kelpie who was leaning down towards Lydia.

“That earl could never make you happy. Just when you arrived here, don’t you remember how tired you were? It was his fault, wasn’t it? You were hurt by his philandering, weren’t you?”

“Who did you hear that from?”

When Lydia glanced at Nico, he averted his eyes away.

He can’t keep his mouth shut.

But what Kelpie said maybe true.

She wasn’t sure if she wanted to change the close and distant relationship she had with Edgar. She returned to Scotland in fear of that happening but as time passed by in Scotland, Lydia was gradually able to regain her old self.

The townspeople didn’t believe in fairies as they always have been and gossiped about oddball Lydia from afar, but even though people talked badly about her behind her back and no one understood her feelings, she realized she would never be alone as long as she had her fairies.

When she had just left London, she was feeling lonely, tired and confused even though she had fairies to keep her company.

During the time Lydia was with Edgar, she must have been under his influence believing she was pretty like a normal girl or more.



If the noble, handsome Edgar, who was sought-after from women throughout London society, seriously claimed that he was only interested in her, then she wouldn't mind considering it..... But after she came to her senses now and recalled how she had desired so much from him for even a second, she realized how vain and dreaming she was.

Every person is born with what they could and could not do. We should all live within our own capacity. Living quietly with fairies was the best life for Lydia.

"No Miss, a married man's philandering is like a disease. As long as you treat him with deep love, his sickness will be cured and he will come to love only his wife....." said Coblynau as he continued to pull Kelpie's hair.

Something like that could only happen in a million years. Besides, why do I have to be the generous one?

"If you are worried about his adultery, then it is best that you return to the earl. Miss shouldn't be the one cheating with a kelpie."

“Hold on, that’s a good idea. Lydia, if you want to get back at the earl then I’ll help,” offered Kelpie.

“You don’t have to!”

“Then please return to London,” argued the coblynau.

“Hey, shortie, don’t stick your nose into other’s affairs. Lydia isn’t going back to London ever again.”

Kelpie picked up the coblynau. The mine fairy must have feared he would be eaten. The blood rushed out of his face and he fainted.

“Oh Kelpie, don’t be mean to him.”

“Hey everyone, tea is ready!” yelled Lota.

Nico was the first one to jump down from the mailbox and ran to the door. Small fairies came bustling out from some bushes.

Even Coblynau awoke and jumped out of Kelpie’s hand to escape to tea.

“Human food isn’t really that filling,” murmured Kelpie as he also entered the house.

My goodness, fairies sure say and do as they please.

But Lydia still didn’t hate them for their selfishness and innocence.

If you knew how to get along with them, they treated you well.

For one thing, no one in the town dared to approach this Carlton house which was occupied with fairies. So the only one left to take care of cleaning the house was the hobgoblins.

The family’s house was built on the best location of the area, and her father was an university professor and well-respected by the townspeople, so she was able to hire a housekeeper to come clean and cook every day while her father was here. However, since his only daughter was seen as a freak no housekeeper was hired was she was here alone.

In such a house, it was wonderful to have a human guest who would sit down and have tea with Lydia.

The tea, prepared by the resident hobgoblin, suddenly appeared on the table out-of-nowhere, but Lota apparently didn’t bothered by it.

Lydia’s fairy friends surrounded to inspect Lota as this was a rare chance to see Lydia’s human friend. What a peaceful afternoon this was.

Lydia could see that this was the best life for herself.

If she remained here, she wouldn't be messed or rattled around by Edgar....as much.

If she didn't return to London, what would he think?

"Lydia, what are you doing?" asked Lota.

When Lydia was fumbling around in the study late at night with the light on, which caught Lota's attention and she poked her head in.

"You aren't going to sleep?"

"I just wanted to research something."

Lydia was searching for her mother's diary.

In the diary of her mother who was a fairydoctor, there were records and useful notes written down about fairies.

She read all the volumes of her mother's diary collection repeatedly to see if anything was written about the Blue Knight Earl, but found nothing.

Since the earldom was an England peerage, there might not be any information about it in Scotland.

Perhaps her mother only knew what was published in the popular novel about the earl.

Lota placed her candlestick onto the table, and glanced down at what Lydia had scribbled down.

"Is it about the Blue Knight Earl?" she asked.

"Um, well you know how I'm the Earl's private fairy doctor? Edgar doesn't know anything about fairies, but he needs to know how to communicate with fairies, or he will be in trouble in the future."

Lydia knew how Edgar wanted to become like the first earl. If he didn't, then he wouldn't be able to win against the man who inherited the earl's magical powers.

She was bothered by what the coblynau said and decided to use this opportunity to go through with earl's family history with a fine tooth comb, but that wasn't because she was worried for Edgar, it was her duty.

After Lydia repeated that same excuse to herself in her head, Lota tilted her head in confusion.

“Hey Lydia, in all honesty, you really do love Edgar, don’t you?”

“Huh,”

Lydia was ready to laugh at Lota’s remark, but she was gazing at her with such a serious face that wouldn’t allow any humor so Lydia remained silent .

“If you realized that you do care for him after being apart so long, then I’ll go beat the hell out of him so that it’ll straighten him out.”

I wonder if he could ever become a proper man.

As she worried about that, she closed the diary.

“I can’t tell if I have feelings for him or not. He was the first man who was so charming and nice to me, and there are times when he’s serious which makes me want to believe in him, but when I’m here, alone, without Edgar, I am happy with that.”

“But you would stay up all night looking up something for him.”

“This doesn’t really feel like it’s for him, more like for my satisfaction. The duty of a fairy doctor is very important to me. If I didn’t have fairies, then could never be happy.”

“I understand. Since the fairies here seem like they really do care about you.”

Lota grinned. Lydia smiled back at her, and an idea popped up in her head.

She heard that her fairy doctor mother had left the place she was born and eloped with her father.

She brought only Nico along, parted with her childhood fairy friends and came to live in an unknown land with only one man she could trust.

Why was she able to make such a sacrifice?

Lydia could understand how easy it would be to trust a serious, honest person like her father. But she also knew making such a big decision didn’t depend if your partner was honest or not.

The reason she untied the string around her mother’s diary to open it might have been because she wanted to know the reason behind that decision, but the only thing that was written in the diary was about fairies.

Her mother had very close fairy friends and knew how much time was remained in her life.

That’s why she must have written all that she knew about fairies for her

daughter who could also see fairies like her.

“Lota, I’m thinking about going to Mannon Island.”

“Where’s Mannon Island?”

“It’s one of Edgar’s island estates. Merfold who has known the earl family for generations lives in those waters. Edgar and I don’t know all that well about the earldom, so we must learn more about it.”

It was Lydia who helped Edgar become the Blue Knight Earl. However, the true powers of the Blue Knight Earl were so powerful and that he could rule a whole country in the fairy world.

Even if she called herself the earl’s private fairy doctor, Lydia had no magical powers of her own, she could only research what was written by others.

“That’s why you’re going to Mannon Island? But Lydia, it’s not important that you don’t have any powers, but your feelings towards Edgar.”

In regards to feelings, Lydia was scared about coming to the truth.

That’s why she tried to turn her focus on something else.

Going to Mannon Island might be the only way to delay her return to London.



When he woke up in the morning, Paul Foreman saw a young man with brilliant golden hair standing before him.

“Good morning, Paul,” said the visitor.

If this man didn’t speak, people would think he was a sculpture.

He stood with his back straight and held a top hat and walking stick in his hand. He was a perfect example of beauty. His soft, gentle smile enhanced his perfectly carved face and there wasn’t a crease or wrinkle in his high-end slick suit.

But the background behind him was terrible. Why was he was standing in such a cluttered room?

Paul was a painter so his artistic sense couldn’t allow such a beautiful specimen to stand in such a filthy room.

Why is a noble like him in such a horrible place like this? No, maybe I’m still asleep. So Paul closed his eyes tightly, but when he opened to glance up to see the man’s mesmerizing ash-mauve eyes staring back at him, he finally realized

that this man was the real life Lord Ashenbert.

“M-My Lord...., why are you...., no, I mean, forgive me for being dressed like this,”

Paul jumped out of his bed covers.

Even if he stood up on his mattress, his naturally wavy hair was in a straggly mess and since he slept in the clothes he wore from the previous night out with his drunkard friends, he was in complete disorder.

“Since I didn’t get a reply at the door, I took the liberty and came inside. You didn’t lock the door so I was worried that you might be dead.”

Dead?! That opened up his eyes.

“Uhh, I’m terribly sorry to make you worry. I had a little too much to drink, and I returned at daybreak and had been asleep all this time.”

“I see. You saved yourself by not being home last night. I heard there are some violent robbers breaking into homes recently, and there was a chance they were targeting you.”

As Paul fixed his shirt buttons that were buttoned wrong, he tilted his head in confusion at the earl’s comment about his life being saved and then finally noticed that everything in his bed chamber including the studio he could see through the doorway was completely a mess.

His living quarters and studio was a bit disorganized from the beginning but its currently poor state was far beyond that.

“Whoooahh! Wh-what happened? Who did this?”

He didn’t have any memory after coming home completely drunk and falling onto his welcoming bed.

It seemed like he was so drunk he hadn’t realized what state his bed chamber was in when he came home.

Paul stumbled and rolled off his bed and managed to get back on his feet to dash into his studio.

“You should check if anything was stolen.”

“B-But, but, I don’t have anything worth stealing...”

He was a fairy painter who just barely started. Currently, his only patron was Lord Ashenbert who bought most of his work.

To prove his statement all his painting were left behind, lying on the floor.

However, they were all important to Paul. He quickly went to pick them up and check to see if there were any smudges or paint scrapped off.

“Yesterday Slade’s club was also broken into. Apparently all his servants were tied up and left in the basement.”

Mr. Slade was the art dealer who had been struggling to sell Paul’s paintings and the owner of a high-class club that served the high-class society.

But more importantly he was also the head of a secret organization called the ‘Scarlet Moon’, which Paul was also a member and it seemed like that position might have something to do with this breakin.

It originally was an organization made by a group of painters and sculptors but the leading artists were killed by a man named “Prince”.

Prince also killed the family of Lord Edgar Ashenbert, the man standing before Paul, when he was only a child and had him shipped to America and made him his slave.

The earl later escaped from Prince’s organization and became the leader of the Scarlet Moon, promising to seek revenge, but one of Prince’s subordinates who came to England might have made the next big move.

“Then this, .....might be done by Prince?”

Prince’s subordinate happened to be a 15, 16 year old-looking boy named Ulysses who Paul also met before.

"I’m guessing that they were looking for something. For example Paul, your father was killed by the orders of Prince. You said you didn’t know the reason why he was targeted. What if he had something or kept a secret that Prince needed to know?”

“Do you suppose they thought that I would have that?”

“Do you have any ideas what it may be?”

“Not at all.”

“Slade also said O’neil knew nothing, but the other problem is that you are the son of the murdered painter O’neil and that we don’t know why they uncovered O’neil’s secret connection with Scarlet Moon.

I see, thought Paul. Paul was there when his father was killed and he nearly died

but was miraculously saved, and became Foreman's adopted son who was his father's friend and a fellow Scarlet Moon member.

However there were only a few people who knew that Paul's wasn't Foreman's real son.

Of course the earl knew and that was why he was worried about where that information had leaked out from.

"But it doesn't look like anything was stolen, so they might have realized that I don't have anything important."

"I'm not sure about that, if O'neil's son turns out to be alive, then they wouldn't allow it. Even more if that son might be hiding some important information," said the earl like that was nothing.

".....What should I do?"

Paul shivered. He didn't like the idea of being killed for an unknown reason.

"You should take refuge at my manor."

Paul nodded in gratitude. He had complete trust in this young earl and believed there couldn't be a more trusting man than him.

This handsome, elegant aristocrat was gifted with undeniable charisma that was rare to find in the peerage these days.

He was calm, self-possessed intelligent man who never cowered in any dangerous situation. Not only that his sociable personality allowed him to get along with anyone, which helped him win the favors of the young members of the Scarlet Moon, including Paul.

His habit of having numerous relationships with women wasn't a very ideal trait for a leader but it seemed like he was refusing all offers for the sake of one woman he was interested in, but regardless of that he was an amazing man.

"I would be ideal if we could find whatever they were after before they do."

"The articles left by my father are only sketches and drawings. Would you like to take a look?"

Those were scattered out on the floor as well.

"At least it doesn't seem like they were looking for a painting," noted the earl.

If they were after a painting or letter that might have something important written on it, then they must have taken all the papers with them.

“By the way Paul, I underestimated you. It seems I’ve interrupted the both of you.”

Paul was in the middle of picking up his paintings and turned around tilting his head like he didn’t understand what the earl was talking about.

The earl was standing next to the open doorway leading into the bed chamber. In the direction his eyes were pointing, there was something moving underneath Paul’s bed covers.

In the next moment, the creature stood up and stripped off the covers and peered back at the two men.

It was a young girl with long hair. Her age seemed somewhere around 14 or 15. She had pale, white skin and wore a thin, plain dress that nearly looked like undergarments.

Paul froze, unable to speak as the earl walked over to the girl.

“Excuse me, miss. Would you be Paul’s lover?”

It was his forte in breaking down a girl’s barrier towards strangers with one glance at his smile. The girl’s tight cheeks softened up and she looked like she was about to nod to Edgar’s question which snapped Paul back to reality.

“My lord! That isn’t true! I have never seen her before. ....Um, pardon me, young lady, but why were you in my room?”

At Paul’s sudden interruption, the girl’s face quickly wrinkled into an expression like she was about to cry.

“Oh, please do not cry. It’s all right, I’ll make sure to teach him later. Paul is an honest man. He wouldn’t do any wrong to you,” said the earl soothingly.

As he eased the girl, the earl picked up a green hooded cloak that was lying under the bed and wrapped it around her shoulders. Since it didn’t seem to be Paul’s, it must have been hers.

From there, the earl dragged the still-dazed Paul into the next room.

“Um, I really do not have any recollection of how this happened,” whimpered Paul. He was the one who felt like crying.

“But in reality, there she is.”

“Uhh, I was terribly drunk yesterday and don’t remember a thing....”

“I see. That happens sometimes. But in this kind of situation, you must remain

calm. It will only cause trouble if the woman starts to make a fuss. First things first, in order to keep her calm you must never say that you don't remember anything. Your only option is to have the girl peacefully accept the fact that nothing happened between the two of you."

Paul noticed this was one of those moments when the earl lowered his voice and spoke like the devil.

"My lord, you told her that we wouldn't do her any wrong."

"It means that there are different ways to manage these sorts of things. And there won't be any future trouble if you manage to couple her to another man."

"....Do you always do that?"

"I've never taken a girl to bed while I was drunk and forget about it. Besides, what fun is a tumble if you can't even remember it, it's much more fun to invite a miss and not cause mistakes which lead to trouble down the road."

Paul couldn't find comfort in this lecture of what was natural behavior....and his shoulders slumped down.

"Excuse me...., does that gentleman not recognize who I am?" asked the girl nervously as she slowly peered out of the doorway.

"I don't remember who I am, this gentleman came and spoke to me like he knew me last night, so I was convinced that we were acquaintances and so I followed him here."

"Paul, it looks like you did invite her."

"What, no, I, I didn't intent on inviting her to my place," exclaimed Paul. But he was finally starting to remember things.

His young girl was sitting down on the ground in the corner of an alleyway and was crying. Paul passed by and decided to help her. It was a mystery why all the other people were passing by her like they didn't see her. It was like she was invisible to them.

Paul was desperately trying to recall his memory as the earl asked the girl another question.

"So, young lady, did you come here with him and spent the night?"

The earl asked her like audience enjoying a show.

"Yes, when I'm by his side, I feel like I've known him from before, like

nostalgia.....”

“Which means this could be a meeting chosen by fate,” said the earl teasingly.

If Paul left the conversation in the hands of someone who was seeking entertainment, then the result was going to be horrible. Paul decided to ask the girl himself.

“Uhh, so did I do anything to you?”

Trying to be considerate of her feelings, he decided to be a gentleman and stood ready to take any responsibility.

“What do you mean did anything?” she responded.

However Paul was only returned with a face utterly confused.

“In other words, what happened after Paul and you arrived here last night,” urged the earl.

Aren’t you being a little too blunt, my lord?

“He went inside and fell down asleep on the bed. So I decided that I should go to sleep as well.”

“What? How boring,” uttered the earl.

Opposite of the earl, Paul breathed out in relief and slumped down onto a chair.

“So, young miss, are you saying you don’t remember your own family or name?”

“Yes. .... However I do remember that I served a peer and what my master’s name was.”

“I guess you could have been employed by a peerage. What was your master’s name?”

“Lady Gladys. She was extremely beautiful, a brave and noble woman...”

As the girl explained, her eyes suddenly filled with tears that came pouring down her cheeks.

“I’m sorry, for some reason, when I think of my master I can’t stop crying.”

“Did something happen to her?”

Having his innocence proven, Paul switched his focus on solving the girl’s dilemma.

“I don’t know...”

Her tears wouldn’t stop and she covered her face with her hands.

“If she’s such a lovely woman, I would love to meet her. If we don’t know her family name, then I can’t think of anyone off the top of my head, but I shall investigate who she might be.”

“Thank you so much, sir,” said the girl between a sniffle.

Just then, Paul happened to lower his gaze to the floor and bent himself down towards the girl’s feet.

Lying on the floor boards were several yellow-colored round stones. Furthermore, there were more dropping from above.

They were the girl’s tears.

Her tears trilled down her cheeks and rattled when they hit the floor.

Even the earl noticed and bent down to pick one up.

“Amber stones....?”

“Wha-what could this mean?” asked Paul.

The two men both glanced up at the girl who was still crying.

Her tears soaked her eyelashes and trickled down her cheeks like natural droplets but as soon as they dropped into the air they instantly hardened into amber and made a hard thud as they hit the floor.

No matter how one saw it, she wasn’t human.

“A fairy? Are you a fairy?.....”



The girl didn't stop crying as she nodded back to the earl's question.

"Then would that mean your master is also a fairy?"

She shook her head, but it was unclear if she meant no or she couldn't remember.

"My lord, I think it's best to ask for Miss Carlton's help."

Paul didn't become surprised when he'd see a real fairy now-a-days, but even if he was a painter who specialized on fairies, he wasn't an expert about them. He knew that the fairy doctor Lydia was taking a long holiday to enjoy Christmas in Scotland, but the end of the holiday was approaching.

"Are you saying that I call her back to work? Then no."

"Huh, but why?"

"If its work, then the responsible Lydia would gladly return, but I don't want that, I want her to return because she misses me."

“But she hasn’t shown any signs of coming b...”

Paul nearly finished his sentence but clamped his mouth shut.

This was a man could have any woman he beckoned for, any girl would be dazzled if they spent a minute with him, but for some reason Lydia was the only girl who he couldn’t win over.

The earl was going around exclaiming that she was his lover, but they were anything but that.

Paul wasn’t aware why the earl permitted her return to Scotland, but he wasn't using his usual forceful approach like go getting her himself but seemed to be planning his next move extremely carefully.

Paul felt cold sweat after remembering what happened when people pointed that out to him this past month. What followed was a ticked-off, bitter man.

He would fool everyone with a friendly smile at first but when he opened his mouth he unleashed cold, stinging remarks.

However at the moment, it didn’t look like his temper was sullen. He overlooked Paul’s comment.

“Anyway I’m on my way to meet Lydia. But I don’t want to talk about work.”

“So you finally decided to go and see her?”

Paul wanted to jump from joy.

“I received a report from my investigator that Lydia is heading to Mannor Island. Since it's one of my estates, she’s practically saying to me she wants to see me.”

He hired an investigator. That means he’s having someone report to him what she’s doing.

If she wasn’t the one who told him, then she must have no idea that the earl was planning to greet her.

In contrast, she might have not told him because she didn’t want to see him....

Paul didn’t have the courage to say that out loud.

“Then could you take along this young lady and have Miss Carlton talk to her?”

“I said I wasn’t going to take about work, didn’t I? Besides, what if Lydia misunderstands me bringing along another woman?”

“Uh, then I will accompany you,” offered Paul.

“No. I’m going to spend some time alone with Lydia. I have to use this opportunity and make amends.”

It seemed like he could only become brave when he was walking on his own territory.

“Paul, until Lydia returns it’s your responsibility to look after this girl.”

“What, bu-but, she’s a fairy. How am I supposed to take care of a fairy?”

“I’ll leave that to you to figure out. Oh, it’s almost time for my train.”

The earl took out his pocket watch and checked the time with the happiest smile no one had seen for a month.

“Now then, make sure to take caution just in case Ulysses is still after you. You must hurry and pack your things. If you need anything, go to my head-maid Harriet, she will take care of the rest.”

## Chapter 2 - To the Island of Merfolk, once again

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In this season of snow, Lydia, who was travelling across the sea on a ship, fortunately arrived to Mannon Island safely, as the sea was calm during the whole trip.

The merrows probably perceived that the visitors weren't harmful, so they didn't set off a storm.

Mannon Island is located in the Irish Sea, on the west of England. Last time Lydia had set foot on the island, it was during early spring, with the island covered in light green grass, but now it was the middle of winter, so the entire island was covered with a fine layer of snow, making the ground look smooth as a sugar frosted cake floating in the sea.

"Wow~ what a big island, it seems that Edgar's has many nice territories in remote areas."

Lota also came along with Lydia.

"Since this is a remote area, there are many fairies living here, but the original landowners were incapable of managing them and the island, so it was delivered to the former Blue Knight Earl."

"I see, but the scenery here is actually pretty good. Hey, that wouldn't be a castle, right? It looks really spectacular!"

"Lota, you didn't go back to your home for so many days, is that all right? Didn't you grandfather tell you to come back to London yesterday, yet you are accompanying me?"

"Oh~ it's okay for me to stay here for two nights and three days."

The architecture of the castle was very elegant, as it was standing on top of the highest grounds of the island, and it had bluish walls, making it highly visible behind the white snowflakes.

In the past, the port was quite deserted, but now the amount of boats has

increased considerably, and despite the biting cold, people were still handling fresh fish and unloading cargo ships, making the surroundings filled with vitality.

Lydia and Lota disembarked the ship during its unloading, ready to head to the only inn on the island.

“Nico is already gone, eh.”

Lota looked around for a gray cat that should have gotten off the boat with them.

“He just met some little fairies and looked happy; he probably followed after them to play with them.”

“With the invisible guy that was with you?”

“Yes, I think Coblynau tagged along with them.”

“Excuse me... Are you Miss Carlton?”

There was a voice that suddenly called out to Lydia, so she halted.

Near the front of the inn, the man was claiming to be the inn’s staff that came to pick Lydia up, as she sent them a letter of notice before, saying that she’d be staying at their inn.

“Welcome to the inn. Due to bad road conditions that are unfavorable for walking, we've properly prepared you a carriage.”

The man looked kind to Lydia, as he pointed to a carriage to stop at the roadside.

“But, the inn is only a few steps away.”

Lydia could not help but feel confused, but the man ignored her reaction and asked her to sit in the wagon.

This inn is served by the Earl’s ancient family estate, which is operated by Tomkins, so Lydia obediently got into the carriage.

However, just when Lota was getting on the carriage, the door was shut as if to prevent her from getting into the wagon, as she fell off.

“Wait, what's this? Open the door!”

Lydia, locked alone in the carriage, was about to reach for the door, but the carriage had already started moving.

Lydia saw rough-handed men stopping Lota from catching up to her.

Next, she saw Lota releasing herself from the men, but the coach turned around a corner, and quickly drove into the woods.

“Please don't worry about it, we're only following orders, we'll go back after for the lady.”

The cabby seemed to be also the partner of the man from earlier.

The carriage went a long way from the inn, went straight into the woods, and was now running on the high grounds where there was the looming castle ahead. Lydia felt a throb.

That guy had, on several occasions, used forceful methods and kidnapped Lydia like this.

But this isn't possible, he's not in London?

As Lydia was desperately thinking, the carriage was crossing the gate and went through a garden. It ran through a driveway and halted in front of the castle.

A waiter came out to greet strangers, and brought only Lydia to a small reception room.

She had no time to ask if the person that summoned her here was Edgar, as the waiter walked out on his own.

The castle's interior décor looked different from when Lydia last visited it, as she looked around the room furnishings.

Although the castle was built in the 16th century, after Mannon Island fell into Edgar's hands, it appeared to have undergone renovations, as the interior decoration has become quite simple and clean.

The ancient furniture and the house ware kept their old-look style, but after the renovation that turned them all brand new, it didn't look like they were there for a long time at all.

The room also had a fireplace that warmed everything up, which was another asset in this castle. Lydia sat down on the sofa and immediately felt the fatigue from her trip.

Edgar is probably coming.

Lydia totally didn't expect to meet Edgar and was having a headache, because she didn't know how to deal with him.

Edgar may have no intention of pursuing Lydia.

Anyway, next to him always revolves a woman, he will always be able to find alternative lovers.

Edgar came to the grounds of Mannon Island; it is probably for nothing but to tell her that her fairy doctor work has been piling up, and that fairy-related events were occurring within the town.

Lydia thought, I really don't want to do this and to be disappointed.

But she didn't know if her love with Edgar would really come to work, and that was why she was lost.

The ticking clock illustrated the passage of time, and the snow was silently falling down, outside of the window.

Lydia, sitting in the comfort of the couch, unconsciously fell asleep.

Even though she felt someone come into the room, because the sofa was so comfortable, she continued to daze through her sleep.

The man's body gave off a smell of the snow and the sea breeze and had probably just come in from the outside. While Lydia was being in a trance, she felt him by her side, while her hair was caressed with a gentle touch.

The gentle touch seemed to have a hypnotic effect, so Lydia fell into a light sleep state.

“..... Without your company, I feel so lonely.”

Even though Lydia was half-awake, she should have well known who that was.

“You’re finally back, my fairy.”

Calling Lydia by a fairy, even though it was ridiculous and ironic, there was only one person who did that.

“... Edgar...?”

“Ah, Lydia.”

Lydia could feel someone whispering in her ear, which made her wake up and open her eyes.

Edgar, with his head leaning down on her, his pale ash mauve eyes in sight, and his blonde hair that was almost touching her face.

Lydia found herself not only lying on the couch, but also resting her head upon Edgar's legs, and sat up hurriedly.

“You, you, you, what are you doing!”

“Oh, why won't you lie down for a while longer.”

Lydia got up off the couch, trying to take deep breaths to calm down.

“I was just watching your cute sleeping face; you're the one who laid down on my lap on your own.”

“Don't, don't say this, why are you here?”

She had just met Edgar and went lying on his lap that was too comfortable, Lydia felt so embarrassed and angry.

“I only came to greet you specially, you take the rare initiative to visit my manor, how can I neglect that?”

“My question is: how do you know I'm here!”

“A written letter was sent.”

“I did not write such a thing.”

“Ah, but Nico wrote the letter to me, since I gave him a seal engraved with his initials. He appears to appreciate the pleasure of writing.”

... Nico's pen pal turned out to be Edgar.

In other words, if Edgar wants to know something, all he has to do is ask through Nico.

No wonder when they left the ship, he disappeared as soon as he could.

“Yes, I have yet to receive your reply, I thought the postman was neglecting his duties, so I sneaked into the post office to find out, and I finally saw your first letter written to me the other day, so I didn't pursue. True faith should not be placed within the post office, only to be quickly sent to its recipients.”

He really is a troublesome flirtatious aristocrat.

“Because when I wrote a letter, the next letter would already arrive from you.”

“It doesn't matter, even if I received only five written letters from you, as long as I'm hearing a little from you, I'm happy.”

With only a little?

Lydia wanted, after receiving three letters, to answer to not be rude; but when she thought about Edgar, she could not help but step back.

Now, Edgar was no longer far away from her, he was close, standing there, staring at her.

“However, the past few days, I couldn't write to you, you are not unhappy?”

“No, we did not have an agreement concerning our communications, and Lota said that you were meaning on making me worry about you.”

“I would never do such a thing; it only was because I was especially busy for a few days... Well, it was hard to see you again, let's not talk about this topic.”

Edgar revealed that he was being misunderstood by showing his lonely eyes, but he still kept a smile.

Lydia remains to see Edgar's actions like this: exactly how much credibility is there to them.

“I made you a welcome dinner tonight as well, I know how you like the chef's apple pie, and so he came over to cook for you. Cold butter on a hot apple pie must be a fine delicacy.”

The Earl's chef studied the essence of cuisine in France. Even though while eating, she'd have to put up with Edgar's sweet talk, she couldn't give up the dinner, otherwise it would be a pity.

Seeing Lydia silent, Edgar said out of victory:

“Lydia, I still have so much to talk with you, please don't be in a hurry to leave. Can I move a little bit closer to you? ”

Lydia was hesitant for a moment, but the door was opened with a touch.

Covered in snow, breathlessly rushed in Lota.

“Hey, you guys, I chased after the carriage even after it splashed dirty water all over me! I told you to stop, how dare you pretend to not see me! ”

“Oh, I thought you were curious to see snow that you wanted to enjoy the pleasure of walking in it. In America, we occasionally only had a little of snow, yet you're not excited enough to be barking or jumping around?”

Edgar was treating her as a fool, which annoyed Lota even more.

“Even without seeing much snow, who will feel curious to the point of screaming and jumping with excitement!”

“Lota, did you walk here!?”

Lydia gasped and ran to Lota. She brushed off some snow from her hair.

“The inn staff kept saying strange things, blocking my way. Lydia, I was so worried that you were going to have an accident.”

“I'm sorry, I didn't know you'd be worrying like this.”

"It's that guy."

Lota's fierce eyes glared hard at Edgar, but instead of feeling displeasure, he put his hands on his chest.

"Lota, let me make it clear, this is my house, you don't invite yourself into it, and I have no reason to welcome you."

"Hey, Edgar, do you want to drive out Lota? Then I'll go out with her."

"I finally had a chance to have dinner with you alone."

Edgar showed his dissatisfaction, but he understood that Lydia wouldn't agree to drive Lota out, so he conceded with a shrug.

"No way, but to host a formal dinner, ladies have to wear a formal gown, and you are too dirty."

"I'm too dirty? Is it not because you splashed mud on me!"

Edgar totally disregarded Lota's anger, held Lydia's hand and kissed it.

It was so sudden, so Lydia had no time to shake him off.

"Although I also like the natural simple look you carry, beautifying you in a formal dress is my exclusive privilege."

Edgar held a sweet smile.

"Well, I'll pick you up later."

Lydia had no chance to talk back, as Edgar had turned and left the room, leaving Lydia standing there.

Edgar was still the same.

Lydia saw his attitude was the same as before, and couldn't help but feel relieved, but she also felt like the more she is by his side, the less she knows him.

What does Edgar have in mind?

If he is still the same as ever, saying nice things, I really hope that he will know when to stop, I do not want to misunderstand.

"Man, he hasn't changed a bit."

Lota said wearily as she stared at the door shut.

"He asked me to wear a formal dress, yeah; I didn't bring this kind of clothes."

"I did not bring any with me either."

"So, does he have some with him? "

Lydia was already accustomed to this, but Lota felt dismay and helplessness.

“Lota, there’s no problem; your body is like mine, right? ”

Lydia tried to appease Lota with a smile.

At the same moment, Ermine came in and led them to the dressing room.

“So you came, you and your Asian brother?”

Ermine and Raven are half siblings, and before Edgar became the Earl, they always loyally followed him.

“Yes, Raven and Mr. Tomkins came.”

The noble territory of the manor is his real house that can also be said to be his castle, but the aristocratic mansion in London has many domestics taken in together.

However, Edgar brought only a few of them with him here; it appears that he has no intention of staying.

Ermine neatly lined up the dresses for the two ladies to choose, and Lydia was watching her while thinking that Ermine was really beautiful.

Ermine lived as a male, always dressed in men's clothing, but even if she was wearing a simple black shirt and a tie, she still gave off feminine charm.

Ermine has always followed Edgar, and has loved him in the past. To Edgar, she is considered the most important family member and he cherishes her deeply. When Lydia found out that their relationship seemed to go beyond the normal relationship of a master and a servant, or a family member, she secretly felt helpless.

Edgar is protecting Ermine by deliberately distancing himself from her, avoiding being flirtatious with her. If Edgar was unable to distract himself from loving her, he was being a playboy, and Lydia certainly didn’t want to be part of his entertainment.

“Lydia, do you want that dress?”

Lota’s voice brought Lydia out of her thoughts.

“What? ... Uh.”

“Then I'll choose this one. Anyway, in the end, how many dresses has Edgar ordered for you?”

“I don’t know, I never counted.”

“That guy is really keen about this. But you are not a doll, right?”

But to Edgar, I am probably a doll.

Lydia picked a light pink dress. Although she felt that the colour wasn't right for her, but if she carefully selected and wasted more time, she'd look like a fool, so she decided to wear this one.

“Hey, Edgar! You deliberately fixed me there?”

Lota was wearing a bright blue dress to dinner, and she questioned angrily.

“What? Do you have something to say?”

“I'm asking you: is this intentional!”

The dining room had a long table for dinner that could hold dozens of people. Lota sat at the far end of it and had to speak in a high-pitched voice to ask Edgar, who was at the other end.

She sat at the opposite of Edgar, that is, the furthest position away from him, while Edgar had an arrangement to make Lydia sit right next to him.

“How is it possible for me to appear as rude by making the Princess of the Grand Duke sit in the noble seat? ”

Lota's grandfather was the Grand Duke of Cremona, although their reign has ended. Lota's grandfather was also in exile, but he brought Lota back after she was raised by pirates.

But she herself had never sprouted as a princess in her mind. Although she now lived with her grandfather, she couldn't stand the noble life and therefore went to find Lydia out of boredom.

Lota remained as a leader of the pirates, and also told Edgar to not see her as a princess, but this seating arrangement was definitely to annoy Lota.

Even if there were only three people that were attending the dinner, it was still a formal one. To Lydia, proper etiquette of high society members was still unclear, so she was a little bit confused.

“Lydia, have a taste of this pheasant meat pie, I think you'll like it.”

Edgar was smiling happily.

This pie is the best, of course, but...

“I want to ask, since there are only three of us, why we are in such a spacious dining room...”

“As long as you accompany me for dinner, dining is always much happier than usual, if we could do this every day, how wonderful it would be.”

If Edgar encountered things that he didn't want to hear, he will turn in a deaf ear.

Lota stopped bothering about Edgar and drank her wine in one gulp, then rudely handed out her glass, for Raven to serve her.

At this point, a man came into the room and whispered a few words to Edgar. Edgar revealed an intriguing smile, he seemed to be plotting something, and he went on to look at Lota to say:

“Lota, greet your man.”

“What? Greet my man?”

“You, in the aftermath of the incident, only left crooked words on a note, saying that you are going to Lydia’s home, and then disappeared. Your grandfather was worried about you.”

“Oh, sorry, my words were crooked.”

“Your grandfather is concerned and deliberately wants you to stay in London until you can speak English properly, but he recently got the invitation to visit the Royal Dutch family, and the departure date was coming up, so you still didn’t want to go back to London, am I not right?”

“Hey Lota, is that true? What Edgar said?”

Lota hung her head out of annoyance.

“... Those nobles are only being haughty, if I go along with my grandfather, I would harm him by making him lose his face.”

“But you cannot make your grandfather worry about you.”

“Lota, you don't have to worry, Cremona's noble character is well known, it is not because you hit a few aristocrats who now dislike you that his reputation will plummet, so I told the Grand Duke of your whereabouts.”

Lydia was surprised. Lota didn't really beat the aristocrats, right? It seems like she did, so she fled from London and hid at Lydia’s house.

“Edgar, you scoundrel...”

“Who told you to be so obsessed with my Lydia.”

“I can't believe you’d actually be jealous of a woman!”

"It's not jealousy. Lydia will become the Countess of Ashenbert, if you want to be with her in the future, you must behave like a lady."

"Wait a minute, these are two separate matters, if Lota and I can maintain what we have today, she'll always be my friend."

"Don't tell me you want to interfere with other people's friendship, too."

"I hope you don't say bad things about me to Lydia, which will obstruct our love."

Edgar's eyes were intense, but Tomkins suddenly opened the dining room doors.

Two tall men walked in.

One of the men apologized for interrupting on Edgar's dinner time, and the other man took the opportunity to grab Lota behind her by the arm.

"Hey, let me go, do you not see that I'm still eating!"

"Milady, we will miss the train."

It seems that these two giants did not intend to compromise.

Lota was desperately struggling, and didn't look at Lydia.

"Lydia is very happy these days, take care now."

Lydia saw Lota being forcibly taken away, and hurried to her.

"Ah, be careful on the road."

"Yes, you have to be careful of that big, bad wolf, no matter what he does to lie to you, you must not open the door, don't let him step into the bedroom, you will be cheated, you have to be careful! "

Lota did not forget to remind it aloud despite being taken away, and the dining room door was shut right in front of Lydia.

Lydia thought that coming to Mannon Island would temporarily help her from seeing Edgar for a while, but this was Edgar's territory, and also his castle, his being here right now was reasonable, but Lydia didn't expect such a miscalculation.

This time, she was alone with Edgar.

"We're finally left with the two of us."

Lydia heard Edgar's voice come from behind, and immediately jumped out of reflex.

“Well, because of Lota, all of my credits are ruined.”

You have no credit at all.

“But then, Lydia, I know that all things are in order, so you don't have to worry.”

That is hard to say.

“Let’s enjoy the desserts first. It is too spacious here, we cannot settle down, so let’s move to a quiet and comfortable place.”

Lydia looked at Edgar with a puzzled face filled with doubts, while he went ahead and quickly took her by the hand and led her to another reception room. Although Lydia sat down on the sofa next to the fireplace, she only wanted to hurry back to her room after eating the desserts.

“Do you like the castle?”

As if without any kind of malice, Edgar smiled and sat down next to Lydia.

“The castle’s interior was renovated, and I'd like to hear your opinion.”

“This is your castle, you can decorate however as you’d like it.”

“But in the future, it will become your castle.”

“There won't be a day!”

“The castle is old, but it is spacious and majestic, the design is also very beautiful. After we get married in the future, living here would be good.”

Did he hear me!?

“This mansion is the Blue Knight Earl’s, there’s no way...”

Despite being the Blue Knight Earl who rules over the fairy nation, Edgar had no magic power to see the fairies or to help them.

Lydia deeply regretted that, but was somewhat able to sympathize with him.

“Even so, it doesn’t change the fact that you are the Blue Knight Earl.”

“You're so gentle.”

Edgar looked at Lydia with sad eyes, and she quickly looked away.

Edgar made her forget that they were next to desserts. Lydia reached out to the tray on the table and turned her attention towards food.

“Edgar, if you don’t eat, the butter cream will melt.”

Lydia was attempting to erase the romantic atmosphere around Edgar and her. But Edgar still looked at Lydia with a strong gaze.

“I heard that the island was being protected by merrows, so Kelpie wouldn’t be

able to get in our way. Don't you think it is very suitable for our future married life?"

Indeed, even a kelpie's powerful force wouldn't be able to break the merrows' shield.

The fairies were quite afraid of the kelpies, but the merrows had strong magical powers that could ward off kelpies.

But how did Edgar know about this? Nico probably told him about it.

That traitor!

Kelpie is not here, now even Lota has left, and Nico is unaccounted. Lydia did not expect to find herself alone with Edgar in his castle, which was really bad for her.

She had to be more vigilant, to not let Edgar take advantage of her.

"We are unlikely to have a married life together!"

"But you're wearing the engagement ring on your finger?"

Edgar and Lydia gazed down at the moonstone ring on her hand.

"Since I can't take it off because of Coblynau, I had to keep wearing it, but no one can see it besides us, so my father and other people are not aware of it."

Edgar appeared to show regret by frowning, but he was back to normal right after.

"Is this delicious? I'll give you more."

"I don't want any anymore, why don't you hurry up and eat?"

Lydia tried to distract Edgar as much as she could.

"My dessert is soft with a sweet taste of caramel; just looking at it makes me feel satisfied."

Your hands are not touching my hair again, please!

Edgar compared her rusty reddish-brown hair to caramel, and also played with her hair with his fingers. Lydia looked at him doing it, wondering when the delicious apple pie would come out.

"Lydia, during my days without you, I was so lonely. I thought we finally became lovers, but you suddenly left."

Stop this thing already.

Leaving for the holidays, Lydia managed to convince herself that the feelings

she had for Edgar were just an illusion.

“We will not be lovers. You can speak good words and make me delusional, but when you’ll calm down, you’ll only find out that it's not love. I left you during this period and had no desire to see you, or to see your pain.”

Was it really? Lydia was actually unsure, but still said those words.

“It should be very clear to you that I am not the one in your heart.”

“I only have you in my mind.”

Edgar saw Lydia looking away, and sighed reluctantly.

“No matter how many times I say it, you still won't believe me? I see, then let’s not talk about this matter anymore.”

Lydia felt relieved and thought that Edgar will get over it eventually.

Edgar couldn't see fairies, so he made Lydia his fiancée to bind her, and although she tried to find out what his real thoughts were, she was afraid that their relationship was going to become unsustainable.

“We haven't seen each other in so long, yet I brought you unpleasant topics, I'm ruining the mood.”

Lydia felt that Edgar didn't change, but he seemed a little bit different.

Before, even if Lydia felt troubled, he wouldn't stop and would take pleasure in her responses, but now, if Lydia seemed disturbed, Edgar seemed to somehow feel sorry for his behaviour.

Lydia was probably not showing any feelings towards him, so Edgar seemed to suddenly not be eager to chase after her anymore. Therefore, he chose to leave.

Lydia has always been constantly refusing Edgar, so if he found that she was accepting his advances, Lydia was worried that it would bring a deep scar before they’d leave each other.

Whenever Lydia thought about it, she was scared that she’d be unable to suppress her feelings for Edgar.

“Ah yes, I still don't know what is your purpose here on Mannon Island, can you tell me?”

“Huh? I see...”

Lydia always thought that Edgar's eyes could see right through a person’s mind,

so Lydia hurriedly switched to think about something else.

“In fact, I thought it was necessary to investigate in detail the Blue Knight Earl's history, so I decided to come to Mannon Island.”

“You didn't have to worry about me in the midst of your vacation...

”

“It's not that, it's because I am, after all, the Blue Knight Earl's fairy doctor.”

“You are so quick to deny.”

“... All in all, I heard news about something that people cared about.”

“What news?”

“According to the records, the Blue Knight Earl should have been long gone around 300 years ago in England, but there were fairies that encountered him about 100 years ago. The resentment between the Blue Knight Earl and the Prince might just have started during that moment.”

“So, it was very close to 100 years ago, during Bonnie Prince Charlie's time? During the Prince Edwards' revolution.”

“After that, James II was expelled from England, exiled, and his grandson – Charles? Charlie Edwards, that is, Bonnie Prince Charlie, rebelled to inherit England's throne and failed, so the Stuart were finally defeated and lost their power in England.”

When Edgar was younger, he was kidnapped and brought to America into a mysterious organization of people that inherited the blood of the House of Stuart, where a self-proclaimed Prince seemed to be secretly plotting to take England's throne.

Edgar knew that the Prince hated the Blue Knight Earl and his henchmen probably exterminated all of his descendants, but Edgar didn't know the reason why the Prince hated the Blue Knight Earl so much.

In short, Prince was hunting Edgar, but since he now had the Blue Knight Earl status, which he should not own, the Prince seemed to fear the mysterious power. Though he must still protect his own life, his status and his Earl's reputation, and Lydia wanted to help him as a fairy doctor.

Even though things weren't always going well between her and Edgar, the fact that they wanted to help each other remained unchanged.

“Besides, in order to find out about Ulysses, we must also learn about the Earl's past.”

“Yes, Ulysses probably knows more things better than we do, if he had seized the opportunity before, our chances of winning would have probably been slim, I'm afraid.”

As soon as one would mention Edgar's enemy, he would immediately turn serious.

He would reveal such dark expressions, perhaps because of the burning fire of hatred his enemy sparked in him, making him want to get his revenge. When he gave off such a look, it made him look beautiful and caused one to be breathless.

At this time, Edgar was a totally different person from when he spoke out words of love, which showed the terrible fate full of hardships that he was shouldering. Lydia couldn't help but feel sad.

She couldn't take her eyes off Edgar.

Edgar was probably unaware that his inner grief attracted Lydia better than his sweet talk.

“Anyway, I guess the merrows must know about the Earl's history the most, so I'm going to try asking them tomorrow.”

Edgar's face instantly returned to his original soft one, and he looked at Lydia gently.

“You want to talk with the merrows, can I come along with you?”

“All right, your presence will make it better.”

After their word, Lydia slightly moved backwards.

“Well, thank you for your hospitality, I will go to bed...”

Lydia wasn't done talking, as Edgar grabbed her hand.

He stared at her silently with a strong gaze, which made Lydia's heart beat, and made her whole body stiff and tense.

“What, what is it?”

“You will not disappear tomorrow, right?”

Before, Lydia left without saying goodbye and set out before the sunrise to return to Scotland, so Edgar probably thought about it.

“...Tomorrow I have to go see the merrows.”

“Please don't quietly disappear, if I have done something wrong that made you unhappy, you can vent to me.”

“That is not the case, it is not your fault, it is mine... I'm tired. I know you really need my ability as a fairy doctor, I probably got a little carried away and I wanted to calm my mood. I know this was wilful, so I will be specially investigating the Earl's past for you.”

Edgar hands were still clasped with Lydia's, and he didn't seem too happy about her comment.

“Also, I promise that if I want to take time off, I'll be sure to inform you in advance.”

Edgar let out a sigh showing his pain, and then asked:

“Can I give you a goodnight kiss?”

“Huh?”

Lydia looked up to Edgar and he kissed her on the cheek.

“Good night, my fairy.”

“... Good night.”

She must be flushed. Lydia didn't want Edgar to see her blushing, so she quickly ran out of the reception room.

Edgar was left alone in the room, his palm holding his cheek, and looked at Raven.

“I think Lydia's wariness is stronger than before.”

The sentence came out suddenly, and the brown-skinned teenager tilted his head, as if unable to understand his master's words.

“I had believed that Lydia would blame me, but she said that she was tired. I thought she was also feeling the same way as I do, was it just confusion? It seems I have no hope.”

Raven stopped his action. He seemed to try to think about what Edgar meant, but it was difficult for him to understand what love was.

“If she liked me just a little, after not seeing me for a long time, didn't her longing for me grow? Did she not miss me? I wrote to her every day without any disruption, I also restrained myself from seeing her, not only did she not

miss me, but instead, she was apparently also ready to give up, what is this all about?"

Psychological tactics on Lydia didn't work, so Edgar no longer actively pursued her, but that made her believe that he was not sincere.

"Lord Edgar, so you do not intend to give up?"

"Give up? Give up what?"

"You had told me before that girls were everywhere, so if there's no hope with one then you will give up immediately, looking for the next target, so I thought you had stopped pursuing Miss Lydia because you gave up."

"I am not hopeless, she agreed to have dinner with me, and she also accepted my goodnight kiss."

For Lydia to agree to the dinner was to be expected, but the goodnight kiss was unforeseen, and Edgar couldn't ignore that.

"But Raven, although there are girls everywhere, to me, there is only Lydia."

Raven nodded and seemed to understand, but Edgar was rethinking about what he said.

That is... without Lydia by his side, there is no meaning?

Lydia was lovely. Edgar wanted to keep her around and hoped that she could one day fall in love with him. Lydia was willing to work with him, but he was no longer willing to restrain his heart any longer.

The more he learned about Lydia, the more he got attracted to her; so much that Edgar felt that it was incredible.

However, was Lydia really not in love with him?

If, in the end, Lydia and him still can't be together, he will fall in love with someone else. Edgar knew his own personality, but he didn't want to admit it.

"It is too early to give up, there are other methods that I haven't tried yet."

"Then you must take the quickest and the most efficient method."

"Why are you in such a hurry?"

"I think we don't have much time left."

Ulysses recently started a big move in order to bring Prince back to England, and it seemed to take a lot of work to prepare, so that in the near future, Edgar will have to face and fight his enemy properly.

If he didn't want to hurt Lydia, Edgar needed the resolve to give up on her. Lydia already knows about Ulysses' existence, Edgar could help her by letting her go now, but he didn't want to lose Lydia, so he needed to acknowledge that Lydia will be pulled into the dangers of this war, and thoroughly guard Lydia.

"So, Raven, would you please help me?"

"Of course."

Edgar beckoned Raven, and Raven immediately came up to him with a serious face.

"First of all, go to Tomkins and steal Lydia's room's spare key... Ah! Wait, Raven!"

Edgar hurriedly stopped Raven who was ready to turn around and leave, and told him to not take what he just said too seriously.

Although that sentence was a joke, Edgar still felt the temptation, but his rational heart stopped him from doing so.

Raven stopped and turned, he was looking at Edgar with an apologetic face.

"Lord Edgar, I think Miss Lydia's room's spare key is managed by Ermine, so it is impossible to steal it."

I see, Edgar thought, while feeling relieved.

"Raven, there is really no quick way to obtain a girl's heart, Lydia and I need some more time. I won't make you worry about it, because I have already decided what to do."

Edgar always had his will to fight and had gotten this far, after almost all of his companions died. The only people that were preventing them to be free were the Prince, and to prove his freedom, he also needed to value survival and the purpose of his existence.

Once Lydia will be involved in this war, he is unable to know if he will live or die, but he will not easily give up the will to live.

But Edgar still didn't know whether he could fight for people in the future, rather than just live for revenge.

So when Edgar noticed that Lydia might like him, he would suddenly let go, and so Lydia came up with vacation as a reason to escape Edgar, who took a hit.

Edgar himself was not sure whether he should keep Lydia from drifting away

from his heart again. It has been a long time since he had not touched Lydia, he recalled just now the touch of her hands back then, and he felt that she was still as nervous as before.



“Lydia, I've got up to your door, why didn't you respond to my calls?”  
The next morning, Nico finally appeared in the room by coming through the window, with his tail that brushed the snow and his angry face staring at her. Snow arrived in the early morning but still didn't stop, showing that there was more snow outside than yesterday, which made the outdoors look like a broad

English-styled garden filled with blocks of white bricks.

“Because I could not open the door right away.”

Lydia had just changed her clothes, and was getting up, brushing her hair, while Nico was talking.

“This is why?”

Nico, who was standing on his two hind legs, looked at the door that had heaps of tables and chairs, tilted his head and asked Lydia.

“Well...”

Lydia meant to prevent Edgar from slipping into the room during the night, and deliberately used tables and chairs to block the door.

Although Lydia thought he couldn't be that much in a rush, she could not help but be vigilant at night, as the slightest noise made it impossible for her to sleep.

Wake up, Lydia, your behaviour is ridiculous. Edgar didn't appear, you're not part of his concerns, which made her feel ashamed.

Lydia thought, while Ermine and Tomkins were restoring everything to their original state, and then started to move a chair.

“Can I help you?”

“Sorry to trouble you...”

Uh... Who is it?

Lydia was nervous to look back, but she did and then saw the chair in front of her being easily lifted up by Edgar.

“You, you, you, you, why are you in my room!?”

“Early in the morning, I had heard Ermine say that the door here could not be opened, therefore I asked for an attendant to come.”

Most of the aristocratic residences had exclusive servants, scattered inside and outside of the gates, and Lydia had completely forgotten.

Thinking about it, the sink was completely empty last night, but this morning, it had clean water.

Ermine has come and gone, of course.

“Does this mean that you expected me to secretly come to you?”

“What, and to look forward to? Don't be silly, if you did come, you really

couldn't be called a man!"

"However, since I now know that you were waiting for me, I should visit you out of courtesy."

Which country is this courtesy from?

"I was not waiting for you!"

"Like this, in front of the door of your room, to discuss whether to go in or not is really like we are lovers."

Lydia wished that someone could cure this guy from his seriously wrong thinking patterns.

"Right, Lydia, there is a guest that is looking for you."

Nico grabbed the hem of Lydia's dress.

"Earl, the guest wanted me to ask you, are you willing to let him connect the castle to the sea, so that it would be convenient for him to access it?"

"The sea? I'm not sure what you mean, but it doesn't matter as long as you change it back to how it was."

Edgar was befuddled, but he nodded.

The scenery outside of the windows suddenly changed.

Surrounded by darkness, as if the sun went hiding behind the clouds, the scenery was covered in a layer of blue water.

The whole castle seemed to be sinking into the ocean, as we could see waves swaying seaweed around and fish swimming freely.

Lydia immediately noticed that this was the merrow's magic.

Edgar was curious and wanted to open the windows, but Lydia couldn't help but be nervous about it. However, the windows wouldn't open.

"What is this is all about?"

"The castle really connected with the sea."

"So we're really in the sea now? But that tree over there is a long white cedar from the garden."

"There is a point in the connection between the castle and the sea, if the real world is completely blurred, you wouldn't be able to switch it back to normal."

A man appeared in the room wearing a red hat.

"Excuse me." He slightly lifted off his hat and bowed to Lydia and Edgar.

His eyes had a slight distance between them, the mouth also seemed larger, although he seemed like a human, but his fat body and hands were covered in scales, fins as well as other features, which let people know that he was merrow at a single glance.

He should have asked the other elders to transform him into a human instead of doing it himself, because he seemed to be the same as his usual state.

“Don't you have something to ask the merrows, I helped you by bringing him here.”

Nico was proudly standing upright beside the merrow.

“Oh, Lydia, you don't have to be angry.”

Nico meant to do this as an excuse to Lydia for telling Edgar about everything.

Lydia glared at Nico, and seemed to have something to say, but Nico still maintained his appearance of power and prestige, despite his fur standing up and him shaking a bit.

“I heard that the fairy doctor wanted to meet with us, so I came to visit.”

The merrow explained his presence.

“I thought it was Tomkins.”

Edgar muttered to himself.

“My Lord, did you call for me?”

The butler Tomkins himself had appeared. A group of people standing in front of a stack of chairs looked quite ridiculous.

“Ah, Tomkins, take the guest to the reception room.”

Tomkins nodded, then cleared the towering barrier, and Lydia thought his appearance and measurements were very similar to the other merrow.

“Dear me! So you are alive, Tom.”

“...You said that Tom should be my ancestor.”

“You've almost become a human, though it is simply a replica of Tom.”

“Perhaps this is the so-called atavistic phenomenon.”

It is said that Tomkins' family inherited the merrow's blood, but this was the first time his family members came to face him as a merrow, and Tomkins was pretending to be calm.

“Earl, please forgive my belated greetings. You asked to be blessed, and thanks

to you, we merrows now live along well with the Islanders, we are very satisfied.”

“It is me that should be thanking you people, because you entrusted the sword to me, so I had the opportunity to do a little bit for everyone.”

Upon entering the reception room, Edgar affectionately greeted the merrow, and asked him to sit down.

“And you seem to be engaged, that should be congratulated. If the Earl can live forever, it wouldn't be a waste for our sword to be delivered to you.”

Lydia was taken by surprise, and she quickly covered the ring with hand, but it was already too late.

There was a problem, even though the spell on the moonstone ring was unseen by humans, it had no effect on fairies.

“So, you will pray for the Earl's heir to be born as soon as possible?”

This guy is impossible.

“Why, of course.”

“Rather than that... Elder, I would like to ask you one thing...

”

Lydia hurried to interrupt the sensitive issues that they were talking about.

“I've heard that 100 years ago, the fairies met the Blue Knight Earl. Assuming that the person was really the count, why didn't he come to take the sword? You were there 100 years ago, so do you have any clue about the Earl?”

“100 years ago? Ah~ that is true.”

“Hey, do you have any clues?”

“The Blue Knight Earl disappeared around that time, and countless of people tried to steal the sword, and we were able to meet, but besides you, there was only one other person who made it into the sea, who later died because he couldn't reach the conditions of the sword. But according to this story, the Earl's blood completely died off as early as 100 years ago, so he wanted us to give him the sword.”

“When did the man appear?”

Edgar asked as he interrupted him.

“Just during the past few years, a little bit earlier than you.”

“Was he not claiming to be Ulysses?”

Lydia was surprised and looked up at Edgar.

“Ah yes, he was a middle-aged man.”

“... It is not the Ulysses that we know now.”

“He probably had relatives that died out there.”

Edgar muttered, then proceeded to ask other questions:

“The middle-aged man should have pressed on that he was a blood-related descendant of the Blue Knight Earl, right?”

“He was unable to prove it, so there was no point in doing so.”

“In other words, he didn't unravel the mystery of the poem that guided to the sword of Merrow.”

The merrow nodded.

The Blue Knight Earl's legitimate heir was killed, the Prince was ruthless, so there was no doubt that Ulysses, who was from a bastard lineage, inherited the Earl's blood and the Prince emphasized on this point, using the fact that he was eligible to get the sword.

The result backfired, drowning one of his men.

The Prince gave up on the sword of Merrow because Ulysses couldn't get his hands on it, but he certainly never thought that Edgar would get the sword and become the Earl himself.

“It seems that Prince was involved in the rumours from 100 years ago and had some kind of drama with the Blue Knight Earls before.”

“It is certain that the count did not visit Mannon Island. Obviously, the ancient Earls came here to visit, so it's really unusual... We only know this much.”

“Elder, is there any way we can know more about the Earl's past? The count's past from 100 years ago is still unclear, and I would like to know more about Ulysses and the sword of Merrow.”

Lydia asked.

“The true members of the Blue Knight Earl's family should fully know about this, but saying this now won't help. If it is as the Earl said, that Ulysses has an imitation or a relative, we can only know these things by asking the banshee.”

“The banshee?”

Edgar looked at Lydia, hoping that she could explain.

"The banshee is a fairy that would serve prestigious families' houses, and also, there is a saying that states that the banshee of the family died as a former human soul, but overall, a banshee will protect your family, and it will cry once it predicts a family member's death."

"Where do banshees live?"

"Mostly within the range of a noble family's house."

"So the Earl's banshee should be close? We were unable to find it."

"Before, the old Earl had come over to visit the castle with his banshee."

"Come to think of it, if it is as the Earl of Ibrazel left, he took his banshee with him."

"We can only pray that the banshee is still in the human world. But how can we recognize them?"

"The banshees are mostly young girls who have long hair, are wearing green clothes and always have swollen eyes."

Edgar thought for a moment.

"The banshee's tears will turn into amber, right?"

"Oh, you really know a lot."

"My Lord, Mr. Paul is coming."

Tomkins reappeared, notifying that Paul has arrived.

"Earl, I'm sorry, I couldn't wait for you to come back, so I came directly to meet you. She's been crying a lot, I don't know what to do..."

Paul couldn't wait and walked straight into the living room, excusing himself, but Edgar stood up with joy.

"Paul! You came at the right time, I'm sorry I didn't come to greet you on your arrival."

"Well, that does not matter... Did I bother you...?"

"I intended to immediately send you a letter to call for you, but wow, you're really worthy to be my good friend, you came before I was done thinking."

Most of the people were complaining about Edgar's whims, but Paul was completely oblivious about it, and gave a reassuring smile.

Edgar's followers didn't seem to mind his headstrong plays.

"Is that right? That's really good... I really didn't know what to do, I thought I needed to talk with Miss Lydia."

Paul led a young girl into the room, who was wearing a hooded cloak that was completely covering her face.

Then she rubbed a swollen eye, and looked up.

"Ah! Isn't that the Blue Knight Earl's banshee?"

"What!?"

Lydia heard the merrow's surprising remark and was studying the teenager's face.

"I remember that the Earl once took her to visit us."

"Really, is that true? Are you the Earl Ashenbert's banshee?"

"Lydia, she seems to have lost her memory."

Lydia, completely ignorant of the current situation, did not know why Paul was the one bringing the banshee.

"You mean she lost her memory? ... So she forgot about the Earl?"

"It seems to be the case. Ah, but she seems to remember something, her owner's name."

"My master is Lady Gladys..."

The banshee whispered, as tears spilled from her eyes became amber.

"As the merrow family, we should know, but there is no one by the name of Gladys as a Blue Knight Earl."

"In other words, she should be that count from 100 years ago."

"The Countess?"

The merrow said softly.

"So, if she was the only heiress among the Earls, no wonder she didn't appear in England."

"Only males are eligible to inherit the Ashenbert's peerage, so there was no need for her to take the sword and audience with England's king."

Edgar seemed able to understand and said so.

"The human world is really in trouble, fairies don't care about gender, it doesn't matter as long as they're the Blue Knight Earl."

“In that case, why did that countess Gladys come to England? Banshee, do you only remember your owner's name? Don't you remember your master, when she died, and when she came to England, please?”

The banshee shook her head.

“I have been wandering in the human world, so I did not feel the passage of time.”

“Her memory was sealed, and Lady Gladys probably did so, as she was her master.”

The merrow interrupted.

“Why would she seal her memory?”

“I don't know what happened to her master, but if the memories of the banshee were sealed and she was wandering alone at this point, the other side may have died. 100 years ago, she was the Earl of Ashenbert, but she left no heirs, so she could only deliver an important secret task to the banshee, together with her sealed memories.”

Upon hearing that her master likely died, the banshee suffered and nearly passed out, but Paul who was beside her, held her.

“The important secret refers to what?”

Edgar asked the merrow.

“I cannot unlock the seal, so I have no way of knowing.”

“As long as I meet my master, I should restore my memories, but if Lady Gladys has died, maybe I will never be able to recover them.”

“There must be some way to recover your memories. Now, Edgar should be your master, he is the current Blue Knight Earl.”

Assuming that Lady Gladys knew that the Earl's lineage was cut off, but she still suggested to the banshee "to come see the next host", which means she had wanted to see someone inherit the Blue Knight Earl's house in the future.

“So that's it. Miss, maybe you'll want to hold my hands.”

“Don't hold them!”

Edgar stretched his hands to the banshee, but Lydia rushed to Banshee out of protection and gave Edgar a stern look, and then she turned her head and asked the banshee:

“Banshee, I think you should know how to break that spell. Maybe under Lady Gladys, when you took the task, it'd let you see the owner and think of way to break that spell. After seeing Edgar, try to think that he is the Blue Knight Earl and see if you can remember.”

The banshee looked in bewilderment at Edgar, then gently shook her head.

“I can't believe that he is my Lord, because I can't feel Lady Gladys' powerful force in him.”

Edgar looked away from Banshee and slightly shrugged.

“It seems that I've hardly been acknowledged as the true Blue Knight Earl.”

## Chapter 3 - A bad omen

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After Banshee cried for a long time, she was finally tired and lied down on the sofa to fall asleep.

The merrow left and the yard has been restored to its original state. Edgar was holding his cheek with his hand and was silently watching the scenery outside of the windows.

Banshee personally denied that Edgar was her own master, and he seemed shaken about that.

Lydia was worried about Edgar and decided to not leave the meeting room right away.

“

Excuse me, but would leaving Banshee to sleep in the other room better?”

Edgar nodded in agreement at Paul's proposal.

“Miss Lydia, she was crying then slept to wake up and cry again, she won't get sick from that, right?”

“Well, I'm sure she'll be okay.”

“She looks no different from an average girl, unlike fairies.”

“It might be because Banshee was originally a human, and she forgot that she was a banshee, so she seems more like a human now.”

Paul made a slight smile.

“She looks like a human, but she's as light as air.”

Lydia was looking at Paul carrying Banshee out of the meeting room, and was thinking about what she could do to help out.

If Banshee recognized Edgar as the Blue Knight Earl and recovered her memories from the seal, it would be good. However, the problem was that she didn't feel any power from Edgar, who was supposed to have some.

In order to make up for Edgar's lack of ability to see fairies, Lydia assisted him as a fairy doctor, but she needed to fight Ulysses who inherited the power of the Blue Knight Earl. Lydia felt overwhelmed from thinking about it, and she

couldn't help but feel heavy.

The banshee scattered amber tears on the floor. Banshees were spirits of deceased young humans, so Edgar and Paul were able to see her. However, the amber proved that she was not a human anymore.

Lydia picked up an amber tear at her feet, and was feeling disturbed.

“What should I do with the amber?”

Raven asked, while cautiously picking up amber.

“There are so many of them, perhaps we could turn these into a necklace.”

Edgar was half-kidding and casually replied that.

“No way... They were tears of sadness, they will bring misfortune.”

“Lydia, you mentioned that banshees cry when they predict someone’s death in the family?”

“It is not absolute, because it doesn't necessarily mean that she has really foreseen death. Try burning the amber and see if it burns. If it can be burned, then the amber will lose its fairy magic and turn into normal amber, which will mean that there is no upcoming death.”

Edgar nodded in agreement to Raven, who then burnt the amber.

The ambers were immediately encircled in flames.

Lydia finally settled down.

Sure enough, I'm wrong.

Suddenly, Lydia felt like she didn't understand enough what happened, and that her mood swings would only increase anxiety.

“Edgar, I will try to unravel the banshee’s memory seal, so you only have to worry about protecting yourselves from Ulysses and the Prince.”

Lydia turned to look at Edgar, whose eyes have never looked so serious.

“Whether I can really continue being the Blue Knight Earl will entirely depend on my own capacity, so if I don't break that spell on my own, it will be meaningless.”

Does that mean that Edgar doesn't need me?

“You hired me as a consultant to the Earl family, so is my ability not to help you?”

“So, do you mind my fate? Even if I do not rely on you in the future, you will still

have fairy cases to resolve, and yet, you are willing to spend your life with me?"

"... I am also willing to work for the Earl's home, and to continue being partners with you in your fight, as I have until now."

"It will not work."

"Why? Do you mean to say that if I don't marry you, then assisting you would be meaningless? That logic is strange."

"If you are just hired as the fairy doctor of the Earl's home, then I can't leave such a heavy burden on you. If my future is not the same as your happiness, then I'm just using you."

Edgar said these words and left the room.

Lydia and Edgar were in a lame argument from the beginning until the end.

Lydia showed more than once to Edgar that she did not intend to get married to him, but he just said what he liked now.

"What do you mean, not only did you ruthlessly exploit me before, and also played around with me, now you want to throw me away!"

Raven quietly watched Lydia from the sidelines, and seemed to have something to say, but she had stormed out of the room.

Paul let Banshee lie on the bed, and was about to leave the room.

He then heard a faint voice from behind, and when he turned around to look, Banshee got up from the bed to pull his coat.

"You take a break; you should be tired from travelling, not to mention that you had come along with me on the train."

Lydia told Paul that fairies get tired from iron, so before he took the train, he had asked Banshee if she could take the train, but she said that there was no problem.

Iron appeared to be harmless to the fairies, but they simply did not like that kind of material.

"I'm sorry, I am rude... This is not a train but I feel tired."

Paul thought the banshee seemed to be very afraid of being alone, so he sat down on a chair.

"The fairy doctor is here, so she will help you."

The banshee nodded, but still looked extremely uneasy.

“Besides, the Earl of Ashenbert is a trustworthy man.”

“... Does that man and Lady Gladys really do have a blood connection?”

Paul also knew that Edgar had no connection with the count Ashenbert, since his true identity was the eldest son of the Duke of Sylvainford, a noble family with royal blood relations.

If he had not been involved in the Prince's plot, he should have been a Duke and one of England's most important figures.

However, no matter how noble Edgar was born, he and the fairy origins behind the Ashenbert family had no blood relations.

“Over the years, the human world has changed a lot, the railway track is new in England, and there are many more big cities and factories than before. More and more people do not believe in what their eyes cannot see.”

“The number of people who can see fairies have also dropped considerably, hasn't it? I squatted by the roadside for several days, people should have been able to see me, but no one did, so when Mr. Paul called out to me, I was really glad beyond words, and you somehow give off a reassuring scent.”

“A fragrance? That must be the smell of oil and varnish... But the girls seem to dislike it though.”

“That's not true!”

Banshee denied what Paul said to defend him, so he scratched his head.

“Is it? Thank you... Uh, also, I want to say this, the Blue Knight Earl's power may have increasingly weakened, and the count understands his lack of strength, but still tries to fulfil his responsibility as your Lord. So, he joined forces with a fairy doctor and sincerely hopes that the fairies can feel secure living on the land, he is a good person.”

Paul thought that convincing Banshee that Edgar was really the Blue Knight Earl should be better for her.

“Mr. Paul really trusts that man.”

Paul trusted Edgar from the bottom of his heart, and perhaps he also excessively glorified Edgar. Even though Edgar had a frivolous side, he was liberal and fearless, and that is what Paul appreciated.

“Ah~ yes, and he is my friend.”

Paul saw his first glimpse of Banshee's smile, and she laughed like an ordinary human girl. Paul could not help but think that she looked quite cute.

"Oh, if you're bored, how about letting me paint your face? I'm actually a somewhat fairy painter."

Banshee agreed with a bright smile, and Paul said that he will fetch his sketchbook and walked out of the room.

Paul didn't think that if he left for a few minutes, the banshee would disappear.

He even bent down to see if Banshee hid under the table, but when he inadvertently looked out of the windows, he saw a girl wearing a green cloak appearing in the background of the view from the room.

Snow was still falling, while the girl with long bare legs was on the road, and her shadow disappeared into the woods.

The fairies don't feel the cold, but Paul was still worried about her, and he chased out.

The castle covered a broad territory, the trimmed gardens and forests naturally connected together, and the walking trails were endless, so where could he look?

Wagon wheels have left marks on the driveway, but there were no walking tracks to be seen.

So fairies did not leave footprints, even when walking on snow.

Where did Banshee go? Since she was not within the castle, Paul walked to the path leading to the outside.

Once again, Paul did not find traces of Banshee, and awkwardly stood there.

"Oi! What are you doing here?"

A voice came from Paul's feet; he looked down and saw that it turned out to be Lydia's cat.

Paul remembered that the cat was called Nico, and he has seen several times Lydia, the fairy doctor, talk to him, but seeing that he could understand Nico talking made him feel weird.

"Did you see Banshee?"

Even though Paul was a bit hesitant, he decided to ask him.

Nico had just sent the merrow away and probably met Paul as he just came back.

Nico was standing on his two hind feet, holding a fish that must have been given to him by the merrow as a gift, which had the same length as him.

“The banshee and I just met and said hi to each other, and then she hurried away.”

“Thank you.”

Paul ran out, but was stopped by Nico.

“Wait a minute, do you see the fairy footprints?”

“What, fairies have footprints?”

“Oh, let me help you trail the footprints.”

Nico gave his fish to a hand that was invisible to Paul’s eyes.

“Send this fish to the kitchen, under my name.”

There seemed to be other fairies, but Paul couldn't see them, and only saw the fish floating in mid-air as if it was wildly swimming away in front of his eyes.

“Well, Paul, let’s go.”

Nico moved ahead and Paul obediently followed him.

“It's not like I'm telling you to return the favour, but oh, I have something to ask of you.”

Nico stroked his whiskers and said:

“Can you please draw my portrait? A gentleman must have one or two decent portraits.”

“That is an easy request, so of course, no problem.”

Nico heard Paul agree, and narrowed his eyes contentedly.

Even though he was walking with only his two hind feet, Nico still amazingly had a fast walking speed, and Paul trotted to keep up with the cat in front that didn't leave any footprints in the snow.

Nico seemed to easily trace Banshee’s footprints, but he has yet to see her.

They walked for about an hour, until they saw the port from the village. Nico suddenly stopped.

“The footprints only go until here.”

“Really? How could this be?”

“She could have gone on a vehicle, like a wagon or cart.”

“I'm going to look around.”

The village was very small; the residents' homes were close to the shore.

He saw only a few people on the road, and only some were pedestrians.

Paul then saw a green cape among the crowd, about to board a ship.

“I found her...!”

He hurriedly ran towards that direction.

“Hey, wait a minute! Where are you going?”

The banshee turned around.

But next to Banshee, there was someone who was urging her to go on board.

Standing next to Banshee was a middle-aged woman, and at first glance, the two looked like a mother and a daughter.

“Who are you? This girl is with me...”

Paul quickly caught up, as he was about to reach out and pull Banshee towards him, but the middle-aged woman took a gun out and held it against Paul's chest.

Paul was scared stiff on the spot.

Banshee was blue in the face, and her body was trembling with fear, then the middle-aged woman grabbed her shoulder and angrily scolded her:

“Haven't I told you to not to be seen!”

“Do you know who this girl is?”

“You mean that she is a banshee?”

The middle-aged woman sneered at the nervous Paul.

“You are Paul Ferman, right? You can come if you are worried about the child's safety.”

Paul hesitated for a moment, but the situation did not allow him to revolt.

Besides, Banshee nervously stared at her, which made it more difficult for Paul to leave her behind, so he had to follow them onto the ship.

Paul quietly looked for Nico, and did not see him, but Paul consoled himself, knowing that Nico should have witnessed the story and went to notify the count.

Paul did not know who this woman was, but she knew his identity, and she

might not be one of Ulysses' minions. He was now the only one who could guard Banshee in place of the Earl of Ashenbert, so Paul decided to cheer up.

"Lord Edgar, did you call for me?"

Ermine came to his study, standing straight as usual, with her eyes staring at Edgar.

"Where have you been? Tomkins said he searched the castle but didn't see you."

"I'm very sorry... I went to watch the sea."

Seeing Ermine suddenly have a sad look, Edgar thought that his guess was right, after all, Ermine died in this sea.

After she confessed to Edgar about her betrayal, she chose to drown herself in the sea.

Even though Ermine returned to Edgar's side again, she's different from the past and was reborn as a selkie. Edgar didn't know what kind of mood Ermine had, but what was certain was that she lost her humanity where she lost her life, presumably at the bottom of the sea.

"It's okay, I'm just a bit worried about you."

Ermine lowered her head in dismay.

"Ermine, perhaps I was too careless to bring you here, in fact, I was going to let you stay in London, but I didn't know where to start."

"Lord Edgar, don't say that, I came here again with my own determination. You left my mistakes behind, and I decided to follow you for a lifetime."

To Edgar, Ermine's words were full of honesty and had no trace of the slightest hesitation.

On the other hand, there were some things that emerged in Edgar's mind.

While he was in London, Slade and he had a conversation about Paul's apartment that got ransacked.

Just before Edgar set out for Mannon Island, he and Slade discussed about the incident.

There were very few who knew about Paul's real origins, so Slade had said that the possibility of his identity being leaked to the enemy was very small.

"Count, are you sure you do not have anyone among your people that are

betraying you?”

Slade implied that the informer could be on Edgar’s side.

However, only Lydia, Raven and Edgar knew that Paul was the son of O’Neill, and Ermine might have known that Edgar and Paul met each other at the Duke's residence before, but that was all she knew.

Lydia and Raven would never betray him, but the one who turned Ermine into a selkie was Ulysses.

If Ulysses was aware that Paul used to work at the Duke of Sylvainford’s mansion, it should not be difficult for him to guess that Paul was O’Neill's son.

However, it was only an assumption that Ermine and Ulysses could have secretly remained in contact.

Ermine’s hair was stained with snow, so Edgar walked to her side and brushed off the snow from her hair and touched her cheek with his hand. Ermine wore a puzzled look.

“Your face looks nice with ice.”

Ermine’s possible betrayal showed that her attitude was different from her usual emotions.

Edgar saw Ermine as his companion and his family, so if casually touching made her feel the wrong way, Edgar couldn't help but think that the keen Ermine may have noticed his doubt for her in her heart.

Edgar unconsciously treated every woman the same way as he did with Ermine, but she felt puzzled.

“Because I've stayed too long outside, ever since I became a fairy, not only do I no longer feel the cold, but my skin temperature also left with my humanity.”

“Oh, so you don’t catch colds. Ah, Paul brought the banshee here.”

Edgar quickly changed the subject, but Ermine still looked nervous.

“Yes, Mr. Tomkins had told me.”

Ermine looked at Edgar, and seemed a little on edge.

“Have you ever seen her yet?”

“No, I haven't met her.”

Edgar thought for a moment, as he brushed off the snow from Ermine's shoulders, and took his hand back.

“She seemed to have lost all of her memories and is crying a lot. If you have the time to chat with her, since you two are fairies, you should accompany her to make her feel more comfortable.”

“Alright.”

“I'm just telling you about this.”

Edgar then turned his back to Ermine, and walked over to the window. He felt like Ermine gave him a preoccupied look for a few seconds, and then with her usual quick movements, she left the room.

Edgar turned only after hearing the door slam, and leaned against the window with half-clenched hands.

On Edgar's hands could be seen a honey-coloured amber, an amber that was on Ermine's shoulder.

The amber seemed to have intertwined with the fabric set, as there was residual fabric texture on top of it.

Ermine and Banshee had met, because Edgar couldn't think of anything else but Banshee's tears that could fall on Ermine's shoulder.

Why did Ermine have to hide that she met the banshee?

Edgar had a bad feeling rise in his heart, and wanted to confirm another profound question.

He took out the lamp glass shade and placed the amber on a silver teaspoon, then threw it close to the fire.

The amber did not burn.

The amber was intact in the fire, and was emitting a faint light, as if to repel the flames.

The tears of banshees foresee someone's death in the family.

Currently, the only member of the Ashenbert family was Edgar.

Was it announcing my death?

Nevertheless, Edgar faced his own death and only sighed.

Since I had openly declared war against Prince, it was natural that death would occur at any moment. If my life is coming to an end, does that mean that I will be unable to defeat Prince in the end? Edgar thought, though unwilling, that he was not reacting like ordinary people when facing death with no escape.

His trust was once again betrayed by his own companion, so death was comfortable.

Then he heard a knock.

Edgar hid the amber in his pocket and answered.

“Edgar, is now a convenient time for you?”

It was Lydia. When Edgar heard her voice, his tense mood would relax.

Only Lydia was able to give Edgar a feeling that he was someone extraordinary.

When he was with her, Edgar felt that he had an ordinary and wonderful life, and he was able to temporarily forget the enemy, even though a swarm of doubt and death nearly surrounded him.

Lydia slightly opened the door, but Edgar pulled it inwards, causing Lydia to almost fall in the room.

If he had opened the door just a little bit more, Lydia may have well fell into his arms. Edgar felt remorseful.

“Hey, Lydia, I just wanted to see you too: could we be connected yet?”

“... I didn't come because I wanted to see you.”

Lydia angrily tried to explain herself. Her angry look was very cute, and seeing her standing in the doorway because she was reluctant to come in made Edgar want to pull her in.

“I am only concerned about one thing... Edgar, are you listening to me?”

“Oh, I am listening to you.”

“Why are you holding my hand?”

“Because I want to hold your hand.”

Lydia, irritated, with a slight blush on her face, was looking more and more adorable.

“Let us sit down and talk.”

“Here is good.”

Lydia's wariness was worse than ever.

But, on the other hand, if Lydia didn't feel comfortable being alone with him anymore, did that mean that she could no longer fully reject him?

Even if this idea was unlikely, Edgar still thought about it.

Edgar said that he didn't want to use Lydia, but he refused to give her up.

His attention turned over to look at the moonstone ring on her finger. It contained fairy magic, and it was a proof that Lydia was Edgar's fiancée. Lydia was desperate for his own good. As long as he was determined to fight with her, he could completely protect her from threats like the Prince. However, while Edgar wanted to act, he recalled the amber that could not be burned.

Was his death nearby?

Members of the House of Ashenbert would probably count the fiancée. However, if the banshee's prophecy affected Lydia because of the ring...

"Edgar, Banshee and Mr. Paul are missing!"

Lydia pushed away Edgar's hands that were pulling her towards him.

According to what Coblynau said, he saw Banshee leave the castle and Paul went out looking for her, then Nico and Paul went tracking the footprints of the banshee.

During Nico's teatime, he also did not appear, and Lydia asked Coblynau if he knew about what was going on.

They have left the castle for a long time, and Lydia, worried that they will have an accident, went to find Edgar.

Edgar immediately told Raven to search for them.

Raven went out to look for them, and didn't come back until the evening.

Then, Lydia and Edgar listened to Raven's report in the reception room.

Fishermen told Raven that two people, who looked like Banshee and Paul, followed a middle-aged woman in black on a boat, and went to the other side of the town. Raven then went to the other side.

Raven found a carriage's coachman, who had said that he had seen three similar people at the station, saying that they were heading to London. Raven only asked until there.

"Raven, you did very well."

"But, I was unable to determine whether or not Mr. Nico and the three of them were together."

Raven looked towards Lydia, and presumably felt sorry.

"Nico will be invisible and is a fickle cat, he will not take the initiative to make a

dangerous move. I'm more concerned about Banshee and Mr. Paul.”

“In short, the woman must have known that it was a banshee that she took, and maybe she also knew that Banshee was a member of the Blue Knight Earl's house.”

“... Could she be one of Ulysses' people?”

“It seems like she is.”

Edgar held a rare painful look on his face.

Usually, he wouldn't get angry at the sight of someone being kidnapped, and would also look like he was having fun, so seeing his troubled look was unexpected to Lydia.

“Raven, we're setting off to go back to London tomorrow morning, you're going to tell Tomkins, and ask him to be ready.”

Edgar was taking a decisive action like usual, but Lydia was worried about his unusual reaction.

“Where's Ermine?”

Ermine was not present at this time, and Lydia found it strange, there was no way that Edgar would be mad at her, right? Lydia tilted her head; it was hard to imagine these two people fight.

Ermine didn't talk back to Edgar like Lydia did, she not only was absolutely loyal towards him, and she knew how to soothe his feelings.

“I told her to go back to London, and asked her to take an urgent letter to Scarlet Moon's leader, Slade.”

For Ermine to leave Edgar's side made Lydia feel very curious, she was confused as to why Edgar would send Ermine away in such a chaotic situation. This idea flashed into Lydia's mind, but she did not think about it any further.

Maybe it was because Lydia didn't want to know what kind of relationship was going on between Edgar and Ermine.

Raven left while Lydia was in a daze, and when she came back to her senses, she didn't notice that there was only Edgar and her left.

Don't leave, Edgar will make a move on me. Lydia was feeling alerted, but Edgar didn't do anything, he was sitting on a chair while staring straight into the lamp's flame, and then whispered:

“Do you have any plans for tomorrow?”

Oh, and what does that mean?

“Do you want to go back to London with me?”

Usually, Edgar would bring her back with him without any explanation.

“I can't leave Nico alone.”

Lydia felt that her answer was lacking in frankness, and added:

“And I want to try to help Banshee.”

Lydia also wanted to help Edgar become the true Blue Knight Earl, but it was something she couldn't say.

“I got it. Ulysses is also related to this matter, so it might be dangerous, but I'll keep you safe, so you don't have to worry about it.”

That sentence sounded like Lydia will only bind their hands tied.

Since Ulysses aimed for Banshee, it must mean that he is secretly plotting some sort of plan, so Edgar should logically need a fairy doctor's support.

“I won't give you any trouble.”

Lydia answered in a mad tone.

“What you said upsets me, I hope that you can rely on me.”

Edgar revealed a wry smile and stood up.

“But think about it, all I'm giving you is trouble. I'm unconsciously relying too much on you; it looks like I am dependent.”

Edgar said that in a sad tone, and Lydia couldn't help but look at him questioningly. Edgar came towards her, but Lydia didn't have any bad feeling.

“Give me your hands.”

What's the matter? As Lydia was feeling surprised, the moonstone ring on her finger was removed.

“Even if I do this, you will still keep the ring with you, right?”

Indeed, Lydia thought he had no reason to take off the engagement ring, since Coblynau's magic made it invisible to the average person, so she kept wearing it, even though she wasn't used to seeing it on her own finger.

However, seeing that Edgar took off the ring himself made her feel strange.

Does this mean that Edgar does not want Lydia to be his fiancée anymore?

Edgar's behaviour appeared unchanged, but it also seemed to be different;

even though he seemed to intend to pursue Lydia, he's deliberately keeping his distance.

If Lydia didn't go to London, would he have done the same?

If you don't want me to fall in love with you, you only need to say so.

Edgar left her there standing alone in the room. Lydia clasped on the moonstone ring.

"Hey! Lydia, come help me open the window."

For how long have I been sitting here?

Lydia heard someone beating against the windows and turned around. She saw a black horse standing outside of the windows: Lydia was shocked, and ran to it. "Kelpie! How were you able to run to the merrow's island? This is not good for you."

"I just wanted to see you a little."

Lydia opened the window, and Kelpie changed into his human form as he entered the room.

"I heard that the Earl had also come, how is he to you?"

"Well... It's..."

"What's the matter? Tell me."

Lydia held the ring in her hand behind her back and quickly faked a smile.

"Nothing. Some incidents have happened here, and I'm going back to London tomorrow."

"Oh, London. So you're going to go back to the guy's side?"

"This is my job."

Kelpie approached Lydia and stared hard at her. Although Kelpie wasn't using his eyes' magic, his gaze's mystical beauty still made Lydia dizzy.

"You said incidents, are they not associated with those guys who wanted to kill the count?"

Kelpie was more perceptive than expected.

"Lydia, stop with the count's affairs, that guy named Ulysses can be tough, are you going to die for the Earl? And I think he is not serious about your engagement."

It was true that Edgar was always selfish, and one moment, he'd put on the

ring, then, he'd take off the ring.

Even the engagement was something that Edgar resorted to in order to achieve his own goals.

Lydia gripped tightly on the ring under her palm, and couldn't help herself from frowning in pain.

Kelpie suddenly pulled Lydia to him, and hugged her.

"You, what are you doing..."

"You seem to be quite depressed."

Lydia never opened to Kelpie, but she couldn't push him away.

Kelpie could appease the human soul with his magic, or Lydia suddenly felt very at ease.

Why am I depressed?

Lydia wanted Edgar to not keep on pouring sweet lines on her like with Ermine, but now she was depressed because Edgar took off the moonstone ring, and that was indeed very strange.

Now I'm frustrated?

Edgar was a human, not a fairy, and there were so many times where they were unable to know each other's true inner thoughts and were unable to communicate them to each other.

"Please let go of Miss Lydia."

That was Raven's voice.

Lydia's heart jumped and she tried to push Kelpie away, but he held on tighter.

"Kid, why should I listen to you?"

"Miss Lydia is Lord Edgar's fiancée."

"That is a mere formality."

Raven stepped forward, ready to attack Kelpie.

Kelpie let Lydia go and quickly backed away.

"I advise you to stop. You can't control your own strength and suppress the power inside of you. If you really want to play with me, you will fight until you die."

"Kelpie, stop!"

Lydia quickly got in between the two to stop them.

“You should tell that kid to knock it off, if the sprite attached to him doesn't want to and goes out of control, he will absolutely not stop until the kid dies.”

What! Is that true!?

Lydia got nervous, and persuaded Raven instead:

“Raven, calm down, I will immediately tell Kelpie to leave.”

“What's this? Why should I leave?”

“You can't stay here! If you don't leave, you will be discovered by the merrows anyway.”

Kelpie clicked his tongue to show his unwillingness, but Lydia pushed his back to the window.

“Hey, kid, you go tell the Earl, do not think that you will get to marry Lydia and that I will lose to you. If he continues to harm Lydia, I will not show him any mercy.”

After Kelpie jumped out of the window into the darkness, Lydia closed the windows, and timidly looked at Raven.

“I am very calm, do not worry.”

Raven came at a right time, and Lydia let out a sigh of relief, but she was accidentally caught by Raven while she was in Kelpie's arms, so she also felt quite embarrassed.

She would be even more embarrassed if it was Edgar.

If Edgar saw it, he would have immediately stopped them and gotten upset, but Raven only silently stared at Lydia.

Finally, Raven said as if he was determined:

“Miss Lydia, please do not betray Lord Edgar.”

“Betray? I did not...”

“You are Lord Edgar's fiancée, but you were hugging Kelpie, which is an act of betrayal.”

Raven's words made Lydia angry.

“What do you mean? I never said I liked Edgar, and you should also know that we were only engaged because we had no choice.”

“No matter what kind of engagement it is, it is still an engagement.”

“So, Edgar did not betray me during the whole month! If you can say that to

me, it would be better for you to remind it to that womaniser instead.”

“Lord Edgar did not do anything to betray you, he does not have any other woman.”

How is that possible.

However, Raven didn't lie, so it might be true.

Wrong, it is simply not possible. Lydia denied it.

Lydia left London for one month and a half, and Edgar, without fearing being discovered, must have had a good time, since he could not live for a long time without girls around him.

“Lord Edgar needs you.”

“... The one he really needs is not me.”

Because the originally dead Ermine went back to his side.

If Edgar really quit playing with women and decided to be faithful in love, then in one month and a half, he should have begun to focus on a new girl, instead of Lydia.

Hypothetically speaking, Edgar had no reason to deny Ermine who was reborn as a selkie and had returned to his side.

Lydia's emotions were somehow able to calm down thanks to Kelpie, but now Raven disrupted them again. She hastily fled the room in order to avoid Raven's eyes.

Paul was forcibly taken away by some men and was blindfolded with a cloth until he was brought into a room.

Which district in London was he? Paul felt as if he sat in a carriage for a long time, but the area was very quiet, so it was not a city, but a suburb.

The windows were nailed down, so he couldn't go outside through them.

And of course, the door wouldn't budge.

“Hey, Paul, are you there?”

Nico's voice could be heard from outside and the surprised Paul leaned against the door to answer:

“Mr. Nico! How did you come here!?”

“Oh, I turned invisible, so I have not been found. Something is very wrong though, Ulysses must be the one behind this.”

Paul thought that the situation was indeed terrible; they were caught by Ulysses and could be killed.

“Paul, are you listening to me?”

“Ah... I am listening, I am just a little bit shocked.”

“Now is not the time to be scared. I'll help you open the door, let us hurry and escape away from here.”

“You have the key?”

“I saw the woman putting the key in a drawer, so I went and stole it.”

I see. Fairies that can turn invisible can do everything very easily, how fortunate he was that Nico came along.

After Paul heard the sound of the door being unlocked, he turned the doorknob and the door opened.

The house's hallways were very dim.

“Come this way.”

Paul followed Nico by trailing his sounds since he couldn't see him, as they were surrounded by darkness and Nico was invisible.

“May I ask why you were willing to follow me here? Are you not Miss Lydia's cat?”

“I'm not a cat, I'm more than that, I am on equal standing as Lydia and I am her companion. I have the freedom to act on my own, and if you are gone, who is going to draw my portrait? So yes, I'd be very troubled.”

So he was only thinking about the portrait, but Paul thought that it was okay, since Nico seemed to like his drawing skills.

“Ah yes, Mr. Nico, where is Banshee being held?”

“I don't know, I only followed you. Anyway, she is not a human, so she won't die if left unattended.”

But Paul thought about Banshee weeping, and therefore could not bear to leave her.

“But... but... She is fearful person.”

Paul then heard a faint cry.

It was Banshee's cry! He quickly turned and walked towards the source of the sound.

“Hey, fairy painter, where are you going?”

Paul found the room where the crying was coming from. He gently opened the door: it was actually unlocked.

Banshee was wearing her cloak's hood, sitting on the floor in the middle of the room with her hands on her knees; she was curled up and was crying.

“Banshee, are you okay? Did they bully you?”

The banshee then quickly shook her head.

“No, I'm fine...”

“Phew, that's good, can you stand up?”

“Well, they said that I won't be able to see you anymore, so I...”

“Hurry up, we're running away.”

Banshee shook her head, and seemed reluctant to get up.

“I want to stay here, I'd like to see the true Blue Knight Earl.”

“What are you talking about, the Blue Knight Earl was the man you saw on Mannon Island.”

“But they should be able to make me see the real person who inherited the blood of the Blue Knight Earl.”

Paul helplessly looked around for Nico.

Nico's gray fur appeared in front of them, with his hands crossed on his chest.

“Who told you that? Is it that woman who brought you here?”

“No, while I was in the castle on Mannon Island, someone gave me a letter. The letter said if you want to see the true Blue Knight Earl, deceive them and leave the castle to head towards the port. When I arrived at the port, she said she would take me to see the Blue Earl Knight.”

So that was why Banshee suddenly ran out of the room, but then that added a new mystery.

“In the castle? Who brought the letter to you?”

“It was a maid that had short black hair, but she wore men's clothing. She immediately handed the letter to me and told me how to read it at once.”

That woman was Edgar's valet's sister, how was it possible! Paul was panicking. Or, maybe Ermine simply transmitted the letter that was entrusted to her?

Regardless of who told Ermine to do so, the addressee was the hope and an

important girl to the clan, how could Ermine not discuss about it with the Earl, and show a suspicious letter to her?

She even took the advantage to hand the letter when Banshee was all alone and didn't have anyone by her side. Paul was also very concerned about this point.

Paul felt like he seemed to have discovered an unknown secret, and Nico was constantly twirling his whiskers out of worry.

“... So what happened to the letter? Do you still have it with you?”

“The letter said to immediately throw it into the fireplace after reading it... Anyhow, I want to personally see if that person is truly the Earl. If Lady Gladys has really died, then that person is my new master.”

“You didn't lose your Banshee senses, you still loyally only serve the true family.”

Upon hearing the voice that had just interrupted them, Paul's body was immediately scared stiff, as the one who appeared in the doorway was a young man with pale blond hair.

It was Ulysses!

At first glance, he only looked like he was 15 or 16 years old, but he was Prince's confidant, and proficient in manipulating the fairies' power.

Paul stepped backwards, but suddenly remembered that he had to protect Banshee, so he gathered his courage to stand in front of her.

Ulysses completely ignored Paul, and came up to them.

“Banshee, I am finally able to meet you.”

Banshee staggered to her feet.

She stared at Ulysses, and walked over Paul who was in front of her.

“You are the Blue Knight Earl...”

“You've got it, right? You should be able to sense who is the real descendant of the count.”

“Yes... I feel the same power from you as I did from Lady Gladys.”

“Wait a minute, Banshee, it is not him, and he is not a legitimate heir to the Earl family.”

Ulysses suddenly grabbed Paul's necktie, and with a pair of angry eyes, said:

“Are you trying to say that I'm a bastard offspring of the count, now? My ancestors didn't count it as a formal wedding, but this is only a rule of human society. In the fairy world, anyone who has a blood relationship is of course eligible to inherit everything!”

Ulysses let go of the Paul, and he fell to the ground. Banshee ran to his side in surprise. To Banshee, the teenager should be her master that only she could have been able to recognize, but she couldn't believe that her owner would treat Paul so rudely.

She looked back and forth at Ulysses and Paul.

“Banshee, that man is my enemy, and he is only being kind to you in order to gain your trust.”

Banshee worryingly looked Paul, who got up, and tried to explain:

“No, you can't trust that man! Please believe me, the man that you saw in the castle is the real count!”

“Why does that guy always have a crowd of admirers? That’s really disgusting!”  
Ulysses pulled out a gun, and aimed it at Paul’s head...

## Chapter 4 - A lonely night alone

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It was late at night, and London was shrouded in thick fog. The Big Ben's bells ringing sounded mired at the deepest part of the sleeping streets.

Standing on both sides of the road were street gas lights surrounded by fog, pouring out dim light, leaving a faint shadow of the building touching down on the ground.

Perhaps because of the cold and the fog, there was almost no one on the streets, there wasn't even a coach.

Kelpie was boldly walking towards the Earl's mansion.

Lydia said she was coming back to London, so he arrived one step ahead. It would be nice if Lydia continued to have her vacation, but unfortunately, she was unwilling to stay there forever from the start.

He wished for Lydia to cancel her engagement with the Earl.

Kelpie could use his brute force to bring her back to the Scottish highlands. This would be to protect Lydia from danger, so if he forced Lydia to stay in the highlands for some time, she will be able to understand and forgive him.

Kelpie thought about it while jumping over the fence covered with roses to sneak into the Earl's mansion, and then took a break at the fountain.

He inadvertently looked up to the second floor, and saw a figure preparing to slip out through the windows.

Turns out to be the seal woman, Kelpie mumbled.

Ermine was now a selkie, and she also had suspicious manners. Kelpie thought about how she was hiding something behind the Earl's back, and couldn't help but to have his attention caught by her.

Of course he did not worry about the Earl, but it was because Lydia was around the count.

If you want to go out to work, you don't have to come out of the windows, not to mention that your own fairy conscious is weak, so you should be like ordinary

people and use the door.

Kelpie became doubtful and decided to track Ermine.

After leaving the Earl's mansion, Ermine rapidly walked in the streets. Whether it was fog or darkness, fairies were not like humans who couldn't see clearly, so Ermine was moving very fast.

She grew faster when she arrived on the road next to the park, in the remote outskirts, and then finally stopped when there were no more buildings. There was a grass-covered swamp, and she went to a house next to it.

She stood at the door, and someone inside opened the door right away; it seemed to be waiting for her visit. Kelpie hid to only see the house radiating a faint light, but the light soon disappeared, as the door was presumably shut.

Kelpie crept close to the house.

The house's windows were nailed with wood planks, so it wouldn't expose light or so that no one could look into it.

Kelpie thought about how he could explore the estate, but just as he was walking around the house, some object fell from the sky, down to his feet.

"What the hell? That narrowly missed me."

The thing seemed to be coming from someone on the roof, but the layer of trees obscured the view, and he therefore could not see the movement near the windows.

Kelpie bent down to confirm what the object at his feet was, and it turned out to be an old suitcase.

Kelpie shook the trunk, and found that there seemed to be something, but it was locked, so he couldn't easily open it.

"How are you?"

Kelpie sat on the ground trying to destroy the box, but a voice came from behind.

"Hey, long time no see, female seal."

Ermine had her arms crossed on her chest, she seemed upset at Kelpie.

"What are you doing? Are you doing bad things behind the Earl?"

Ermine pressed her index finger against her lips as a sign to tell Kelpie to be quiet, and then a voice called out to Ermine from the door. She calmly walked

over and responded only after she was at a far distance away from Kelpie:

“No, there is no one outside.”

There was a young man’s shadow that was looming in the light of the door.

It was that guy! Kelpie’s eyes widened with astonishment.

This teen had the ability of a fairy doctor, had tricked Kelpie before, and had attempted to kill the count.

Now, however, one of the Earl’s trusted partners was standing in front of Kelpie.

“You said that you saw something moving.”

“Yes, but I only saw a fox.”

“Search again properly.”

After the boy was done, he immediately went back into the house.

Ermine sighed with relief, and then turned again to Kelpie.

“I'm not a fox.”

“You really get in the way of fairies.”

“Then why didn't you bring me up.”

“That way I will be forced to fight with you, and it is a waste of energy.”

Kelpie nodded, she must have also understood that if they were to fight one-on-one, she would stand no chance.

“You betrayed the count with the guy who’s underneath everything?”

Ermine grabbed Kelpie’s shirt. Kelpie thought, that she was a human who became a selkie and that there was such a rare and beautiful fairy. Since she was so beautiful when she was still a human, the fact that the Earl did not bother to flirt with her was really abnormal.

“Open the trunk, it should not be a problem with your brute force.”

Ermine avoided having problems with Kelpie.

“Why?”

“Your friend is inside. I was going to sneak him out, but I was almost discovered while I was at it, so I just threw the thing through the window down here, and then ran out on the pretext that there was a suspicious movement outside, but I saw you... In short, quickly leave with what's inside.”

"I have no friends."

"Oh, then it is a friend of someone important."

Lydia's friend? Kelpie was perplexed but destroyed the lock and opened the box to find out...

A gray cat that laid unconscious and paralysed in the suitcase.

"So, it turned out to be this guy."

Kelpie grabbed Nico, then turned to Ermine.

"Are you afraid that I would tell that you betrayed them, so you just gave me the cat to keep my mouth shut? If Lydia saw him, she will be very happy, but if she was involved in this, I would have not accepted this deal."

"This is not a deal, I know you're not going to stand with Lord Edgar, because you don't want Miss Lydia to be snatched away by him. So, isn't there no need for me to seal your lips? And you think that, as long as Lord Edgar disappears from this world, you and Miss Lydia can go back to Scotland to live, if I'm not mistaken."

"Do you intend to kill the Earl?"

Ermine seemingly lowered her eyes in annoyance.

"I don't want Lord Edgar to be taken away from me."

What do these words mean? Did Ermine want to protect the Earl? Or is her betrayal to the Earl was because he couldn't be hers?

Kelpie realized that he had similar feelings towards Lydia.

Kelpie didn't want Lydia to be sad, he only wanted to protect her. He once thought that he could forcibly drag Lydia to the bottom, even if he did so it wouldn't matter if Lydia hated him, over time she would give up and stay by his side.

In conclusion, this was a way of protecting Lydia, wasn't it?

"You don't say, you will trouble Lydia if you do!"

"In any case, look for ways to keep Miss Lydia away from Lord Edgar."

Ermine picked up the empty trunk and left the backyard.



“Nico, wake up! Oh,

please don't die!”

Lydia let Nico lying on the chair, and stroked his hard body.

Nico was paralysed and laid there motionless.

Raven and Edgar also came back to the mansion in London and were in the living

room, observing Nico's situation.

“He does not seem to be hurt.”

Edgar was unable to resist turning and turning Nico around, then picked up his tail, and lifted his foot. Lydia worried and had to stop him.

“He is sick? Fairies get sick?”

“I'm not sure, don't mistreat him.”

Lydia had just returned to the London residence, and met the housekeeper who told her that Nico was found this morning in front of the gate.

Edgar, Raven and Lydia came home all the way from the station, then the two heard the news, and also came to look at Nico, but Lydia thought she probably

shouldn't have let them come.

“If he can smell the aroma of black tea, maybe he will wake up.”

“Stop it, go back!”

Lydia held Nico and some tears were welling up in her eyes, so she quickly turned

her back to Edgar.

“Lydia, I'm kidding, I just want to soothe your sad mood.”

“Then be quiet.”

“Ah.”

Raven inadvertently made a sound, which made them glance towards him.

“... I beg your pardon, I'll keep quiet.”

“It doesn't matter if it's you that speaks, Raven, if you notice anything, please tell me.”

“Raven and I get different treatment from you?”

“That's for sure.”

Raven saw his master losing his temper, and dared not to speak, until Edgar waved

at him to allow him to talk, and so he said:

“Nico's whiskers are gone.”

What's this?

Lydia looked at Nico's face, and discovered that the whiskers that he has

always been proud of were really cut off.

“But he's a fairy, even if his whiskers were cut, it will not cause him pain or restrict his mobility...”

Lydia was not done talking, as Nico slightly opened his eyes.

“Nico! You finally woke up!”

“..... My whiskers.....”

Nico mumbled, then opened his eyes widely and broke free away from Lydia, and

hid under the pillow.

“Looks like you are quite well.”

Edgar pulled the cushion, and Nico savagely held onto it.

“No, you are not allowed to look! Do not look at my face!”

“What's the matter? Is it because you have no whiskers?”

“Don't say it!”

“Forget about it, do you know the whereabouts of Paul and Banshee?”

Nico knew that it was urgency, so after thinking for a long while, he seriously answered:

“They were taken to an empty house on the outskirts. At the south of

Chelsea, there is a river, and after crossing the river, you'll see that there is a watermill attached to the house. Ulysses is there, but I don't know how the

fairy painter and Banshee are.”

“You were caught by Ulysses too?”

“He grabbed me, and most importantly, shaved my whiskers... The blow was too much,

so I lost consciousness after, and then my memories completely ran out.”

“So do you remember anything? Even how you got back to the mansion, you don't remember?”

“I don't know!”

Nico gripped the cushion to cover his face, and while maintaining the pose, he

called out to Lydia with a sad voice:

“Lydia... Bring me the mirror...”

Lydia handed him a mirror and Nico presumably wanted to confirm that he lost his whiskers.

“Uwaahhh!”

Nico let out a scream, then collapsed on the seat again, probably because he was

too shocked and fainted.

Lydia sighed, on one hand she felt helpless, and on the other hand she felt more at ease.

She picked up the cushion and seeing Nico’s faint and depressed look, she took care of him by stroking him just like when he stroked Lydia when she was crying.

“Perhaps Ulysses can feel other people’s most taboo things. Fortunately, Nico’s life was saved.”

“Well, I'm just glad Nico is okay.”

Lydia relaxed, then bent over to fasten Nico’s crooked bow tie again. Edgar had a lonely look as he silently watched Lydia, but she didn't notice.

“Raven, please tell Scarlet Moon to immediately split up to find the empty cottage

that Nico had talked about.”

Lydia looked at Edgar who was giving Raven a command, and then stood up. Although Nico returned safely, Paul and Banshee were with Ulysses, they don’t know if they're okay.

The problem has not yet been solved.

Edgar and Raven were preparing to leave, but Edgar suddenly stopped and abruptly

asked Lydia a question.

“Lydia, does the Banshee’s death predictions have a maximum time span?”

“Huh? Why are you asking this?”

“Pure interest.”

Edgar was always interested in strange things, so Lydia did not think too much about it.

“... It will come true within almost a whole week.”

“I see. If there is anything about Paul, I will let you know if there is any progress.”

Edgar finished and  
left. Lydia went home waiting for him to send someone to report the latest news, and they were already there on the second day. They found the empty house that Nico mentioned, but Raven explored it, and the house  
was empty. They only found Paul abandoned in a room, with his hands and feet  
tied up.  
After Paul returned to the Earl's mansion, the calm was finally restored, and Lydia  
met him in the reception room.  
Sitting at the corner of the living room was Paul, who has been beaten, as his face was bruised.  
“... Mr. Paul, you’re okay!”  
Paul scratched his head, embarrassed as usual, with only a minor injury which was fortunate but unlucky.  
“I'm sorry for making you worry, but Banshee was taken away by them.”  
“Perhaps Ulysses’ goal was Banshee?”  
Those words came from Edgar, so Paul revealed an intriguing expression, then corrected his posture and replied:  
“Yes, there is nothing wrong about that. However, Ulysses needs more than just Banshee, he is also looking for the amber that can unlock Banshee’s memory seal.”  
“Amber can unlock the memory seal?”  
“Banshee's memories seem to have been sealed inside tears of amber when she foresaw the prophecy of Lady Gladys’ death. But Ulysses can’t find the amber.”

“This is what Ulysses told you?”

Lydia was surprised, but Edgar seemed to understand.

“So he didn't kill you.”

Paul looked somehow apologetic, and nodded his head.

“Yes, he told me to look for the amber, and also constantly asked me if I knew

its whereabouts, but I kept telling him that I had no clue, that I didn't know what

he was talking about... So he told me to go to the Blue Knight Earl, since he

should be able to find the amber with his fairy magic...”

Ulysses’ sentence was clearly provocative and Edgar laughed coldly.

“He ransacked someone else's house but could not find it, it's just like a lost

dog that barks at nothing.”

Then again, if that amber is the Blue Knight Earl's important item, then Edgar

must live up to the Blue Knight Earl's reputation and find it.

“Mr. Paul, is Ulysses keeping Banshee as his hostage?”

“Ah, no, I don't think he will lay his violent hands on Banshee.”

“In other words, the banshee acknowledges him as the descendant of the Blue

Knight Earl?”

Paul apologized and hung his head, then said:

“However, why should Ulysses have Mr. Paul find the amber?”

“Because he found out that Paul's father had kept the amber. Although the amber’s

location is unknown, but according to this, Paul's father was holding onto it.”

Presumably, Ulysses deliberately looked into Paul’s family line, then asked him

to find out where the amber could be on Edgar's side, and therefore left Paul alive

so that he could send the word to Edgar.

In other words, Ulysses was convinced that the amber was in Paul’s surroundings.

He probably sent people to search Paul's room, but didn't find anything, so they

thought the amber was cleverly hidden somewhere, and that Paul was the key to

finding it.

"I think the amber is at Mr. Paul's side."

Lydia spoke her assertion.

"Oh, why do you think so?"

"Didn't Banshee appear in front of Mr. Paul? I think this is because Banshee

sensed something."

Paul pondered for a moment, but could not remember his father's possessions, as

they all looked the same.

"Lydia, I have a question, if I find the amber and break that spell, and then brought

Banshee back, does that mean I can really get the Blue Knight Earl's strength?"

"... There is a possibility. Since Lady Gladys sealed her memories in amber

with fairy magic, then the amber probably has the same essence as fairy magic."

"Ulysses seems very persistent about the amber. Maybe Prince wants to use

its power, so if it falls into someone else's hands, it will cause problems to Prince."

"Prince killed the Blue Knight Earl's lineage, perhaps he was afraid that the

amber would fall into their hands."

"Then I have to find the amber and break the spell on Banshee, but even if I can

find the amber, I wouldn't know how to use it."

Did Ulysses know?

Maybe he already knew, but it was also possible that after Banshee recognized

him as the Blue Knight Earl, she recalled the way to break the seal and then told

Ulysses.

“Finding out where the amber is, is a top priority. Mr. Paul, can we search your house?”

“Of course you can.”

“Paul, other than Raven, you call a few people to do that.”

Paul nodded, then looked up to Edgar uneasily.

“I'm sorry, my Lord, in fact, I have something I'd like to talk over with you.”

Lydia was about to leave, but upon hearing these words, she could not help but stop, however, Paul said apologetically:

“If you don't mind, I hope that I can talk privately with my Lord.”

Before Edgar had to ask Lydia to leave, she automatically left the room, although her heart was reluctant to do so.

Will Edgar still need me in the upcoming days?

Since Edgar took off the ring, this question haunted Lydia, and it made her chest feel heavy.

Banshee received a letter  
where it was written that the true Blue Knight Earl was waiting for her, which  
was why she left the castle on Mannon Island, and there was a strong  
possibility that the one who presented the letter to Banshee was Ermine.  
When Edgar listened to what Paul said, instead of being surprised, he felt the  
opposite and came to think about why there was amber that fell from  
Ermine's  
shoulders.  
Edgar, of course, didn't want to jump to his own conclusion that Ermine had  
betrayed  
him.  
The one who handed the letter to Banshee should be indeed doubted, but  
Ermine may  
have simply transmitted a letter that she got to Banshee.  
However, Ermine lied to Edgar and said that she hadn't met Banshee, and that  
was what was weighing on his mind.  
All in all, he now had to be more careful than ever.  
Edgar was alone in his study and was constantly thinking about this matter.  
He was unable to see through Ermine's mind, just like how it was before.  
Even if he asked Ermine, she probably wouldn't tell him the truth, and so now  
the  
only thing he could do was to carefully observe how the situation will  
develop,  
although Ermine was already being on her guard.  
From now on, it was important to not let Ermine know anything, but if he only  
let her deal with small daily tasks, she would probably become suspicious.  
Ermine was very keen, which was the most vexing thing about this.  
Edgar clenched his hand on the desk. It was very difficult for him, but he told

himself that he must absolutely find a way to solve this.

“.....Why is it like this?”

He muttered to himself.

Why did Ermine still had to take orders from Prince and Ulysses?

After Ermine was reborn as a selkie, she could only turn into a human by taking

off her selkie's coat. Without their coat, selkies were unable to go back

to the sea, so they had to submit to the people who took their coat, but Ulysses

should have been unable to limit Ermine's freedom.

Since Ermine's coat was in Edgar's hands.

Edgar had no intention to bind Ermine, but he was keeping her coat as long as

she would want him to. Edgar would give it back to her at any time, and Ermine

knew that well.

Was Ermine obeying Prince and Ulysses out of her own will? If that was the

case, then Edgar couldn't imagine what the reason was.

Did she want to ruin Edgar?

Maybe she was only doing this in order to save her soul.

Edgar gave her a ray of hope but could not use his hands to give her happiness,

and so she felt resentment towards him...

In that case, Edgar will choose to die for her so that she could no longer be harmed

again.

In the corner of his heart, Edgar was thinking about such a thing.

Since I cannot give anything to Ermine, rather than being alive...

He took out from his jacket's pocket, an amber piece, and looked at it in the light.

Edgar thought that this amber may predict his death.

He brought the amber near the candle.

The amber was still emitting a faint light and was pushing back the flame.

“Oh, this is a harbinger of death.”

Edgar turned around, and saw Kelpie climbing in through the window.

“That's a tear from your house's banshee.”

From head to toe, his perfect body looked like a Greek statue that was daring to stand in front of Edgar.

Edgar didn't even want to look at his face, especially not right now.

“What are you doing here?”

“Hey, Earl, you still don't intend to break off your engagement with Lydia?”

“You sure are tough, I definitely won't.”

“You are going to die anyway, you should quickly break off your engagement with

Lydia. Your death prophecy could harm her, and if anything happens to her, it'll be too late by then.”

Edgar, of course, was also very worried about it, but he didn't want to give Lydia to Kelpie.

“I will guard Lydia, so leave me alone.”

“Let me say this first, I am also acting according to the norm, but if the situation is not good, even if Lydia doesn't want to, I can still force her to leave you...”

Kelpie's dark pearl eyes were staring at Edgar.

I claimed the Blue Knight Earl title, but even this guy won't go away, this is ridiculous.

Edgar tried to evade Kelpie's grasp, but his eyes bewitched him, which left him motionless.

Until someone knocked on his study's door.

“Pardon me, Lord Edgar.”

Raven was here. Kelpie muttered “real trouble”, and then stepped back.

“Your servant is quite troublesome.”

Kelpie immediately disappeared, and Edgar helplessly looked at his opened

window

and sighed in frustration. Rather than his own eyes, Raven's mystical eyes were quite strong.

"Was someone in the room?"

Upon entering the room, Raven seemed puzzled and looked around.

"Well, it was the horse."

Raven nodded knowingly, then closed the window and locked it.

"I think you have to be careful of Kelpie, although he is Miss Lydia's friend, he is not our comrade."

"What happened?"

Raven rarely pointed his point of view with a firm tone, so Edgar couldn't help but ask.

"..... I saw him courting Miss Lydia."

Raven's subtle facial expression seemed to be somewhat different. If this was not an illusion, then Lydia probably showed Kelpie a side that Edgar had never seen.

If Lydia accepted Kelpie, was it because he was honest?

Lydia never refused him because he was a fairy, and never doubted his heart. Because fairies didn't lie.

Edgar was not ready.

He had rushed to Lydia before she was allowed a change of heart. Although she didn't have a change of heart, Lydia had finally started to care about him, and so Edgar didn't want to give up.

However, even though Edgar wanted to do more for Lydia, time was running out.

"Raven, would you help me protect Lydia?"

Raven always faced Edgar's sudden problems, and nodded without hesitation.

"Of course, because Miss Lydia is your fiancée."

"I didn't mean that, I meant that even if I am not here, I want you to protect

Lydia as a friend.”

Raven tilted his head, seeming unable to understand the meaning behind Edgar’s words.

He didn't need to understand it now anyway, it would be enough if he were to understand

someday.

The same goes about Ermine being his sister, too.

Edgar did not intend to tell Raven his concerns about Ermine, because once he knew,

he would hastily proceed to kill his own sister. In Raven’s heart, his loyalty

to Edgar was still more important than love between siblings.

Edgar believed that even if Ermine’s betrayal was true, he should not let Raven know.

Otherwise, he'll never value a human being’s life.

“So, you went to Paul’s house to search? Have you found the amber?”

“No, we even looked into the paintings’ frames and the oil paintings, but we failed to find anything similar to amber.”

“Maybe when we look at it at a first glance, it does not resemble amber.”

“Amber that doesn't look like amber...?”

Edgar said that, but he couldn't imagine it. He had speculated that there

might be some paint camouflaging on amber, although the enemies must have

thought of that. After all, as long as there were suspicious objects, they

would be exposed soon enough.

Even Ulysses must be certain that it was in an unexpected shape.

He was going to let Edgar find the amber and then snatch it? Banshee was

in their hands, so just knowing the whereabouts of the amber was enough to recover her memories.

“We also have Slade’s club.”

Raven nodded and when he was about to leave the room, Edgar inadvertently stopped him.

“Where is Lydia? At Paul's house?”

“Miss Lydia has returned to her house, after she heard that her father had just concluded a research trip and came back home.”

“Oh, right.”

It seemed like even if he wanted to invite her for dinner, she wouldn't have agreed.

This was also one of his bad habits. Because when he was with Lydia, he could forget about his worries, so he always asked her to accompany him, even though he

was just selfishly using her.

If Lydia really wanted to, he should have let her go back to her home in

Scotland. Then again, if Edgar got this determination, he should have done that when Lydia was taking her long vacation.

Edgar was now hesitating and felt troubled, and put the amber into his pocket.

“Nico, you're not going to eat dinner?”

No matter what Lydia did, Nico kept silent, went under her bed and then refused

to come out.

“My father brought some gifts back, and there is smoked salmon and whiskey, if you

don't eat, everything will be eaten.”

It has been a long time since Lydia didn't have dinner alone together with her father. After she was done eating, she hurried back to her bedroom on the second floor, feeling that Nico must have been really hurt. Even alcohol didn't interest him.

Nico's fluffy tail had peeped up a little from the bed, but when Lydia sat down on her bed, he immediately hid his tail.

"Nico, even without your whiskers, you are still a great gentleman. When Paul and Banshee were taken away, you still followed them to see where they were

being taken to, despite the situation being really bad and dangerous." There was still nothing from under the bed.

"Even though you are capricious and sometimes cold-hearted, I know that you have many good points."

Lydia brought a small parcel on the bed.

"On my way home, I saw something nice, so I bought it. It's a mask for casual parties and masquerades. It's a doll accessory so it's small, but it's just the right size for you. With it, you can hide your lost whiskers."

Nico seemed uninterested.

But when Lydia was just about to walk out of the room, he suddenly began to speak.

"Lydia, you have to be careful, Ermine might be betraying the Earl."

"Gee! How could that be?"

Nico said this sentence too suddenly, so Lydia thought it was a silly joke and laughed,

but Nico continued on and said seriously:

"Banshee received a letter which said that she will be allowed to meet with the true Blue Knight Earl. It's possible that Ermine handed the letter to Banshee and led her to meet Ulysses. Paul also knows about it, so he should have already told Edgar."

Was that what Paul and Edgar were talking about earlier?

Lydia thought about it, and suddenly felt like Nico may have some credibility.

But if important people once again betrayed him...

Edgar must have suffered a deep blow.

And right now, was he being alone?

Wait, what he is doing now shouldn't matter? Lydia was upset to be thinking about Edgar.

No, he is so thick-skinned, he should be fine.

No matter what happened, he could always remain calm, which was what Lydia knew

well about Edgar.

However, he was very good at hiding his inner thoughts.

Lydia walked back downstairs to the living room. Her father was reading

academic records. She sat down next to her father.

“Lydia, it began to snow outside again, tonight seems to be very cold.”

“Indeed, father.”

I'm so stupid, I don't have to worry about Edgar.

Even if he was feeling unbearably lonely and was hurting inside, it was not up for

her to worry about him anyway, or to comfort him since she was a girl.

It was because Lydia didn't want to become one of his female friends, and would

deliberately keep her distance between him.

Edgar came to a club exclusively

for men from the upper class, where only members could access.

The club was operated by Slade, where people met to socialize, and was also

being a secret organization called “Scarlet Moon” that was sponsored by the

artist members of the organization.

Thus, the club was decorated with fine art, such as paintings and sculptures.

In order to be worthy of the high reputation of the club, they carefully

selected exquisite works and displayed them, though of course there were many

works from the hands of artists that have actually not yet been known as

artists.

Red carpet was rolled out on the hall's stairs, crossed under gorgeous

chandeliers, and led to where Edgar and other gentlemen were playing all night

long. Tonight, a few members recognized Edgar after he gave them a nod. "Earl Ashenbert, recently, you often come here to see it."

"People like me who often come to the club aren't bothered to not be able to visit it?"

"More or less. Anyway, I have excused people from the back door first, but also asked everyone to treat it as if they had not seen it."

Edgar turned away, didn't stop after hearing high-pitched laughter behind him coming from drunken gentlemen, and went straight into a room.

Edgar's destination was where a burglar broke into a few days ago and left the room upside down. Therefore, it has not yet been cleaned, so it was temporarily

closed to visitors, instead some servants bowed down to Edgar and opened the

door for him.

The club's owner Slade was waiting for Edgar, at the other half of the room, where it was already cleaned up.

"Your Honour, I don't remember ever receiving amber-like items from O'Neill."

"Don't you have several of O'Neill's works?"

"Yes, I've placed them here and I'm preparing a thorough examination of them, but there are several picture frames that were destroyed, where the surface of

the paintings were damaged, so we suffered huge losses."

Edgar looked at the arrangement of paintings in the corner. Those were the works

of Paul's father.

Painting landscapes gave him a familiar touch that he greatly missed. O'Neill had portrayed the Duke of Sylvainford's mansion, so the Duke's estate had displayed several of his works.

O'Neill had to draw paintings at the Duke's residence for some time, when he was a child, and that was how Edgar and Paul thus met.

O'Neill sketches showed the Sylvainford's residence, as well as family portraits, but those works had burned in the fire, so of course, they could never

appear at the club. However, O'Neill's unique strokes evoked memories of Edgar's home.

Edgar was now watching Paul's delicate brush strokes that were passed on. He then said:

"Slade, in the future, if there is any important information concerning the amber, I hope you will pass them to Paul, or tell me by yourself."

"Can't I let another servant know?"

"Did you not say that the secret might be leaked by someone around me... This is for safe precautions."

In order to prevent any news to get to Ermine, he must guard everything against

her, which left Edgar's heart ache.

To have to wonder about his own companions was very painful to him, and even if

they were subsequently proved innocent, the fact that he once had doubts will

linger in his chest.

The partner who betrayed was feeling painful too, there was no doubt.

Ermine may also feel that once she betrayed, even if she was forgiven later, she once again betrayed the party because she could not truly accept herself. “That's just fine, there's something I want to talk to you about.”

With a solemn expression, Slade revealed the topic:

“It is about the Wallcave village’s Freya.”

Edgar was embroiled in a fury fight at the Wallcave village. The

village was where the fluorite came from, and Ulysses attempted to use the magic of the Wyrms that produced an extremely rare fluorite, the Freya. The Freya contained incredible magic, reportedly by the Wyrms that was reborn with the Freya, and later by the villagers that escaped, but Edgar had dispatched the Scarlet Moon members to search for their whereabouts. “We found the bodies of the missing people, which might have been deliberately

sunk into the sea from the cave. Their clothes were also filled with stones, as if they had encountered a storm of waves by chance.”

“What about the Freya?”

“I couldn't find it.”

Since their bodies were submerged, it was definitely homicide, and they died in the cave in the village, which means that the mayor with the Freya was shortly killed after he ran away.

However, Ermine told Edgar that she had chased the villagers, but had let some escape.

“Is a village’s murderer that killed them and took the Freya, necessarily one of Prince’s henchmen?”

Edgar turned around, ready to leave the room quietly. Slade was confused and called out to him.

“Earl, do you have any clue?”

“I have none..... I want to drink some wine and have some gin delivered.”

Edgar only dropped the topic, and then joined a riotous and noisy circle.

“Oh, Earl, did you not leave through the back door?”

“I just came back.”

“You were really fast, was there no lady to keep you?”

“Do you also want to have a look? They have not retained the prostitutes in the back alleys to leave them bored.”

Because this group of drunken men made silly and vulgar jokes and was laughing

noisily, Edgar joined them and poured down some gin. Just get drunk, you can temporarily think about nothing. They tried to persuade Edgar to smoke tobacco mixed with a special flavour. The room was full of white smoke, and Edgar inadvertently looked at a picture on the wall.

It was a painted portrait, with a maiden holding a shield.

The little painting was very simple; it seemed to be used to fill the gap

between the other larger paintings that were hung on the walls. Kerosene lamps were

very close to it, so the girl’s blonde hair looked even more dazzling under the light.

Edgar felt like he had met this woman somewhere.

It was probably an illusion. Or rather, her green eyes just made Edgar

think about Lydia, was it why it looked familiar?

..... I am dying to see Lydia.

Accompanied by a strong yearning, his chest felt pain.

After confirming that her father was still working in his study, Lydia took the advantage of the night to sneak out of her house.

It was a cold snowy day, and her exhaled breath would turn into white mist, like cold wind that seemed to freeze at night. Even so, Lydia, with her bright red cheeks, boldly went out alone in the middle of the night while feeling shy.

She stopped a street carriage, and had the coachman drive her to the Earl's mansion.

Lydia was shuddering before she slowly calmed down, and didn't understand why she wanted to go to Edgar.

She even lied to her father that she would sleep and sneaked out of the house. Even if she met Edgar, how would she confirm that he was depressed? Lydia even wondered if she could help him cheer up.

Moreover, he probably wasn't home tonight or had some female companion with him that Lydia didn't know...

Lydia thought about this, and wanted to retreat.

As she leaned forward, ready to tell the cabby to return, she saw the Earl's mansion's lights greet her, so Lydia could not help but swallow her words back,

because she suddenly had a strange feeling about this, a feeling that Edgar was waiting for her.

It is impossible for Edgar to be waiting for me.

But Lydia had missed the opportunity to turn around, and so she finally remained

in front of the count's mansion, after getting down the carriage.  
The Earl's follower seemed to have found the carriage halted at the door, and Lydia

has not yet walked up to the door, that the door had already opened.  
Raven was the man who came out to greet her.

“Good evening, Raven.”

“Good evening, Miss Lydia, what's going on?”

Lydia never came to visit in the middle of the night, so Raven was probably  
amazed.

“Uh..... I have forgotten something here.....”

Lydia thought that coming to see Edgar at midnight was very abnormal, and  
could

not help but feel ashamed, so she lied about it.  
She thought that while pretending to look for her forgotten item, she could  
check

on Edgar's condition.  
Lydia told Raven that she will immediately go back, so she kept her coat, which  
she took off, in her arms. Raven held a candle in his hand behind her, so Lydia  
took the opportunity to ask:

“Uh..... Is Edgar out?”

“Lord Edgar had just returned home.”

“That..... Is he feeling okay?”

Lydia asking about such a strange issue probably showed the sensitive  
attendant

that she forgetting about something was just an excuse.  
“He is very ordinary.”

Fortunately, Raven didn't notice anything and so she asked:

“Is he alone?”

Lydia felt slightly relieved, so asked more in-depth questions, however, Raven  
seemed

to be silently confused. Lydia felt a little surprised, thinking that a woman might

be accompanying Edgar.

“No, it’s nothing, it’s fine if he has guests, I’m not looking for him.”

But Raven seemed to be thinking about other things, and then abruptly said to Lydia:

“Miss Lydia, it is rare for you to come, please go see Lord Edgar.”

“Huh? But... but ...”

Despite Lydia’s hesitation, Raven quickly lit the lamp and turned to leave, it appeared

that he was heading to Edgar.

If Raven didn’t bring Lydia to see Edgar after she came over, maybe he will be blamed later.

Lydia casually glanced over at the clock, and once again thought, what she

should do in the end? Her relationship with Edgar was not close enough to

worry about each other and she would be uninvited after coming at such a late

time.

Even Edgar was hesitant about her, now.

Lydia sat down on her desk’s chair, began to worry about and wondered, could it

be because Edgar has been mentioning the word fiancée so much, that she herself

was now shaken?

“Have you found the forgotten item?”

Raven reappeared. Lydia quickly looked up, but saw that Raven was the only one

here.

“Well, yes.”

“I will show you the way.”

Did Edgar not want to see her after all? Lydia followed behind Raven, but Raven walked past the living room, the state room, even the study, and so he did not mean to stop.

They both finally ended up in front Edgar's door.

Lydia had never entered Edgar's room, and to enter the room of someone of the

opposite sex in the middle of the night was utterly indecent, she could not help her heart from resisting.

And the owner of the room was a dangerous frivolous man.

Raven didn't know about Lydia's fear and knocked on the door.

“Lord Edgar, Miss Lydia came over.”

Although no one responded, Raven just stood there in a straight posture.

Raven intended to wait until when? Just when Lydia began to wonder, the door opened.

“Lydia, I am so glad to see you.”

Edgar exposed a joyful smile, then took Lydia's arm and pulled her in.

“I didn't think you would come at this time, and I'm dressed very casually right now, I hope you won't mind.”

Edgar's tie had been taken off and his vest's buttons were unbuttoned, which made him look particularly attractive, and Lydia could not help but fawn wildly.

“Uh, that..... I just came to get something..... So, I will be going back.”

“Don't say that, sit down, come drink with me.”

“No, I have to.....”

The door closed behind her, Lydia noticed that Raven had left, and suddenly found herself alone with Edgar.

“I was just thinking about you, and you came, are we connected now?”

Edgar sat Lydia down on the sofa, and then sat beside her. The mood seemed to be as good as usual.

What, so he's feeling pretty good, I knew I shouldn't have worried about him.

If Edgar was in good spirits, being alone with him was dangerous, so Lydia's

heart wanted to go home as soon as possible.

At the same moment, Edgar suddenly hugged Lydia by her shoulder, then put a glass in her hand and poured some gin.

“People say that this gin is a labourer's wine drink. I often used to drink this with my friends in America, it was a fuel before our battles.”

The gin's alcohol smell was quite strong, so Lydia did not want to drink it, but she seemed to be able to see the cause for Edgar to be drinking his "fuel".

He seemed to be in excellent condition, but his mood was very low.

“So, Lydia, did you forget something?”

“Well... Something that is not that big of a deal. Anyway, stay out of this Edgar, are you drunk?”

Lydia quickly changed the topic.

“Ah... I didn't drink much, I presumably took some strange pills at the club to be like this, but I feel particularly happy.”

Taking pills? Okay.....

Lydia watched Edgar's face, trying to determine whether or not he was reluctant

to put on a happy face.

But Edgar suddenly turned his head, and his eyes met Lydia's.

The distance between the two was very close, Lydia could even see herself reflected

in Edgar's eyes, then he took her hand with a serious expression.

“How did you know that I wanted to see you?”

"I-I didn't know....."

"Did you hear what Nico said? And you guessed that what Paul

privately talked to me about was the same thing, so you were worried about me

and came over, right?"

Edgar's ash mauve eyes were riveted on Lydia and they were as intense as they

always were when he's sober, so much that she had suspicions that he was only

pretending to be drunk.

"Well..... I don't really care... After all, I don't believe it much."

Edgar's face had a rare serious look.

"You're not going to tell other people about it, right."

"That is, of course, but what are you going to do?"

"..... I still don't know yet."

"Also, no concrete evidence has been found yet, so I want to believe she is innocent."

Edgar held Lydia's hands, and put his hand on her face.

"Fortunately, you are willing to accompany me and comforted me."

Lydia's cheeks burned, and she suddenly had difficulties breathing, so she stood up to leave, but Edgar unwittingly pulled her coat, which slipped as a result.

Edgar had her coat in his arms, then used his usual joke and kissed the jacket.

"Stay a little longer."

"It is very late."

"Then I won't return the jacket to you."

The atmosphere imperceptibly became a little ominous.

"Then I'll go home without it."

Lydia turned her back and wanted to run away, but Edgar quickly got up and almost

lost his balance, so Lydia rushed over and held onto him.

“Are you okay? Don't push yourself.”

“You're just too kind-hearted.”

Edgar seized Lydia in his arms, revealing a confident smile.

He tricked me?

However, Edgar looked terribly lonely, and he hugged Lydia.

“Please stay with me.”

Lydia felt cornered by Edgar's desperate feelings, and thus lost the will to push him away.

Edgar's was actually grieving a lot, but lacked support, and yet Lydia couldn't even help him.

Lydia leaned against Edgar and he probably noticed that, so his arms that were around

her waist held on even tighter.

“If you are worried about me, then is this indicating how much you are willing to help me? I can believe that you are here to support me as my lover, and that you're not here to work or something.”

That's not what I meant...

But it was clear to Lydia that she was here as herself, and not as a fairy doctor. She believed that if Edgar was so sad, she could at least accompany him.

“Edgar, I didn't come because of work, but I came as a friend.”

He sighed, and didn't seem to be satisfied at Lydia's answer.

His breath brushed on her neck, which felt so hot.

“I want to spend the night with you.”

“You, what are you talking about, I cannot.....”

“I really need you, I can't let go of you, but I do not want to let Kelpie take you away, I want you to belong to me alone.”

“Wait a minute, why mention Kelpie, I don't belong to anyone.”

“You want to support me, right? If you give up on me, I'm going to die.”

Ah... This was Edgar's usual way; he always exaggerated and talked about death lightly.

He also said that when they first met, but Lydia was being tricked by him. Lydia knew, but when Edgar's lips touched her ear, she did not push him away.



It was only from her mouth that Lydia refused, therefore it did not seem like a complete refusal to Edgar at all, so he gently picked her up. As expected, I fell for his acting! Lydia tried to calm down, but she was so nervous that her whole body stiffened. She didn't know what to do in order to escape from this, and she did not intend to do this to comfort him.

“Hey, Edgar, put me down!”

Edgar obediently put her down, but on his bed.

“..... I love you.”

Edgar always told her that with a deep gaze, but however, Lydia could almost believe him now.

“But this sort of thing.....”

“Despite me being a pathetic man, you still accept me as I am.”

Lydia couldn't say anything, and he kissed her on her forehead.

What Edgar needed now, was not comforting words.

Does he need me to remain by his side forever as a real proof?

Do you really need me?

“You'll forgive me, won't you.”

Lydia did not understand, but to see him so sad like this, she could hardly refuse.

Lydia's mind was in a chaos, while feeling that Edgar was gently caressing her hair.

Then his lips came on her neck, and she froze.

At that moment, Edgar suddenly whispered into her ear.

“Ermine.....”

What!? Ermine.....?

This..... That's it! You're treating me like Ermine's replacement?

I am so stupid, this is unbelievable.

Rather than anger, Lydia was unwilling to, but she felt sadder.

The one Edgar needs isn't me.

I just want to die.....

Lydia suddenly felt weak, like she was hit with a gloomy mood. She turned her face and closed her eyes; she did not want to look at Edgar.

Lydia thought, I knew I shouldn't have worried about him, if I knew earlier that this would happen I wouldn't have come, I don't know what to do anymore.

## Chapter 5 - My remaining time

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Lydia's golden green eyes were looking straight at him.

Edgar's fingers were buried in her sweet, caramel hair. The fragrance of fresh Chamomile drifted in the air, and the scent made his heart at ease.

He gave Lydia a gentle kiss, to prove that he hadn't given up on her.

Though he truly felt happy, Edgar wasn't satisfied. He was immersed in joy, but he still felt a little uneasy, as if something was amiss.

"I don't understand." Her soft lips whispered, as she seemingly tilted her head.

"We're so close, but I don't understand your heart."

Why?

"You are going after me, yet you yearn for another woman."

Another woman...?

Lydia, there's no such thing. I can even give my life away for you.

"You're a liar." Lydia started to cry.

Even though Lydia was being gently held in his arms, she continued to cry

"Don't hurt me anymore."

I've hurt you?

I know I'm a bit rough, but I never forced you.

"Edgar, we won't see each other again. I will leave for the fairy world."

Wait a minute, Lydia!

Edgar called out to her, but she vanished from his arms.

Just when he was going to call for her again, he suddenly woke up from his sleep.

It was just a dream.

He heaved a sigh and sat up.

The heavy curtains were closed, making the room appear a bit dark, but there was still a dim light that seemed to show that the sun was shining brightly outside.

With his messy hair, bangs curling upwards, and a severe headache, Edgar could

not help but frown.

Last night, he got drunk at Slade's club before he came back. He seemed to remember that when he got home, he had a few more glasses, but his memories were a blur from there.

However, Lydia's touch still remained on his body.

But that was only a dream.

"Yes... It was only a dream."

That scene was obviously a dream, but Lydia's expression struck him. While he was delicately holding her and feeling the gentle touch of her cheek, all under the oil lamp, which reflected tears of amber... He did not know why he had those memories, but they seemed to have happened and were prominent, in his mind.

Knowing that it was a dream, he regretted that he could've been a little more daring with her.

Then suddenly, he noticed there was a button on the bed, so he picked it up. After confirming that it wasn't his, his memory was coming back to him little by little.

Last night, Raven reported that Lydia came over for a visit, and then...

Alarmed, he thought he shouldn't have done anything to Lydia and that she'd never want to do anything! He anxiously ran out of the bedroom, went to the dressing room next door and beckoned Raven. Raven appeared right away.

"Good morning, Lord Edgar."

"Did Lydia come yesterday?"

"Yes, Miss Lydia came last night."

"Did you bring her to my room?"

"Yes."

Edgar's hand ran to his forehead, as he paced back and forth in the dressing room for a moment.

"So when did Lydia leave? How did she look like?"

"I don't know. Miss Lydia seemed to have left when I wasn't paying attention."

Lydia entered his room and looked at him with worried eyes. She learned about Ermine from Nico, and fearing that Edgar might have been feeling down, she

came to see him.

Edgar thought that, so far, this part was true and not a dream.

But afterwards, the memory was a dreamlike daze. He couldn't distinguish whether holding and kissing Lydia was reality or fantasy.

Why can't I remember the most important part.

"Too bad, I finally had my first night with my beloved sweet girl, and I don't even have any recollection of it."

Raven tilted his head in confusion.

"Anyway... Let's change my clothes first."

Edgar sighed as he said it, while Raven quickly went to get his new clothes ready and assisted his master while he was changing his clothes, like always. Edgar stopped Raven and said:

"I'm fine. Call Tomkins here."

The butler immediately came to the dressing room. As Edgar was putting on a tie, whether or not Tomkins knew at what time Lydia had returned home.

"I do not know. Miss Lydia probably went back quietly on her own. I had only heard about this earlier, from Raven. I did not even know that she came last night."

Tomkins asked Edgar if he wanted to ask the other servants, but Edgar thought "Don't be ridiculous."

If he did, everyone would know that he was drunk, pulled Lydia into his room, and then couldn't even remember what he'd done.

All in all, Lydia had never accepted his advances, so it was impossible for her to take the initiative, so he must have forced himself on her.

"That problem aside. So, Tomkins, I heard that you were married?"

"Yes, but my wife died ten years ago."

"How did you ask her to marry you?"

"Well... It happened a long time ago. I don't remember exactly, but I seemed to have asked if she thought fins on children were cute, and as my wife heard that, she gladly accepted my proposal. But it was such a shame that our child had no fins."

"... There is no way I can use this as advice."

“Is that so.”

Tomkins pondered for a moment. Then, with his wide round eyes blinking, he asked Edgar:

“Or, should we ask the other servants...”

“No need for that.”

“My Lord, even though marrying for intimacy is the norm, there are also many couples who ignore this. After a while, this mistake will only be a trivial matter in the future.”

In the future... If it was really that simple, he would not have to worry about time. However, if Banshee’s prophecy was true, Edgar may just only have tomorrow.

Even if he was to rush into a marriage with Lydia, it’s possible she’ll immediately become a widow. Then again, if she immediately becomes a widow, perhaps there won’t be any problems. She won’t be considered an impure girl for losing her virginity before marriage.

Then Edgar thought that he shouldn't dwell anymore than this. He immediately took his coat and got ready to leave.

“Tomkins, help me prepare a bouquet of flowers.”

“What flowers do you prefer?”

“Anything ready right now is fine. I'm about to leave. Prepare the carriage, by the way.”

Tomkins left as Edgar watched Raven stand at the gate.

Raven was expressionless like always, but Edgar could see the confusion in his mind.

“Raven, why did you bring Lydia to my room last night? I should have said that I was resting and that I didn't want to see her.”

Edgar vaguely remembered saying it.

Because he drank a lot, if he saw Lydia, he wouldn't have known what he would do, and so he fabricated that excuse.

“I assumed you did wish to see Miss Lydia. You seemed troubled about something. So, if it was Miss Lydia, I thought you might have wanted to speak to her.”

Raven was completely right about that.

Therefore, Raven did not listen to Edgar's orders when bringing Lydia in the house; so he brought her to his door.

"You can see right through the thoughts of my heart. I am very grateful."

For Raven, who was a murder weapon that couldn't understand humans, this was a huge step.

"However, you must be considerate of Lydia's feelings. When I'm drunk, I have no self-control and I am like a wolf. How can you send in an innocent lamb like Lydia?"

Raven nodded, not fully understanding.

"Lord Edgar, are you not a wolf at all times?"

... It seems like he was.

Even Edgar began to feel ashamed.

The doorbell rung, signalling visitors. Lydia heard it from her room, so she quickly ran to the window and hurriedly drew the curtains. Outside was the Earl's carriage in front of the gate.

From the room above the gate, Lydia was able to hear her father's conversation with the guests.

"Lord Edgar, I'm sorry, but Lydia has a cold today. I'm going to have to send someone to escort you back."

Edgar really came.

She began to tense up and pace back and forth in her room.

Lydia believed that because her father had said that she was in bed resting with a cold, Edgar couldn't refute.

"I've thought so, so I've come to visit her."

Don't make your excuse sound so suspicious!

"Ah, so that's why you've come... For you to be coming so early in the morning, I apologize for the trouble."

Her father seemed to be confused as to what to do.

"Then excuse me, may I come in?"

No, don't you come in!

However, her father couldn't find a reason to refuse, so he let him in.

Lydia heard footsteps go up the stairs, and then there was a knock at her door.

“Lydia, the Earl came to visit you.”

If I push Edgar away at this time, Father would be suspicious.

She had no choice but to open the door. But she didn't forget to cast down her face. That way, he wouldn't notice her red eyes.

“Lydia, I heard you caught a cold, are you alright?”

I'm not alright at all.

“May I have a word with you?”

Lydia walked away from the door, and Edgar immediately came into the room despite her father being downstairs. But yet he did not close the door.

“... What are you doing.”

Lydia said to Edgar.

Edgar went around in front of her and handed her a large bouquet of roses.

To visit someone with a bouquet of passionate red roses, Father must've been suspicious.

“Lydia, please marry me now.”

“What, you're spouting nonsense. You already know that's impossible.”

“That is, we'd have to wait at least three weeks before we're issue a marriage license. But please give me three more days, and I'll get the permit.”

“Are you still drunk?”

“I'm awake now.”

“You're still not fully awake then.”

Lydia refused to accept the bouquet, so Edgar placed them on the table. Because Edgar was slowly approaching Lydia little by little, she ended up forced to the window and avoided facing him.

But, Edgar didn't mind. He gently tilted her chin with his fingertips and faced her seriously.

“What happened last night made you cry... Was I too forceful? Maybe because I was drunk I couldn't control myself, but I'm not normally like this.”

Normally... Lydia wanted to ask him, what do you mean by normally?

“This was your first time, and I wasn't gentle. But, please don't reject me. Even if you're unhappy now, I will improve for you.”

You, what are you talking about?

“Er... Edgar.”

“Well, since this has happened, we must get married as soon as possible.”

“Eh, what do you mean by that...?”

“Were we not having an intimate relationship and did something?”

Lydia suddenly blushed with anger and panic, and retorted:

“You, what are you saying? Don’t say that. Nothing ever happened between us.”

With her hands, she tried to push him away, forming a distance between them.

“What do you mean?”

“Don’t you remember? You suddenly fell asleep halfway?”

Edgar whispered Ermine’s name to Lydia, and shortly after, he turned his face away and fell asleep. Lydia was anxious from being pinned down by his body, but then Edgar did nothing else and just fell asleep.

She carefully got out as to not wake him up. She removed his fingers that were buried in her hair and hurried away from the bed.

Though she was relieved to return home, the more she thought about what happened, the more she cried.

In the end, she could not help but tear up again. But she did not want to cry in front of Edgar right now.

Troubled, Edgar looked down at Lydia, as he brushed her bangs.

“Halfway? At which part...?”

“I, how can I know... Anyway, you immediately fell asleep!”

Lydia was so extremely embarrassed, that, as if to disrupt the problem, she ended up shouting at him.

I really hope he doesn't use his beautiful face to calmly say words that make people blush.

“So, really nothing happened?”

Edgar really seemed to have no memory of what happened last night that Lydia couldn't help but forget that she was about to cry.

“No!”

“Then, why were you crying?”

“Because...”

I don't want to say it.

“I'm sorry, I'm sure it was... It should have been quite humiliating for you. After all, I almost did unforgivable things yesterday.”

And so, Edgar reached this conclusion.

On the other hand, Lydia suddenly felt empty seeing Edgar's relieved face.

“Well... So that's what happened last night.”

“So, you don't plan to marry me now.”

“Ah... That's right.”

Does not marrying me make you that happy?

This time, Lydia's heart beat in anger.

“That's great. You can just go home with your flowers now.”

“No, that's not what I meant. I don't intend to revoke the marriage proposal...”

“I can tell you the answer now; I refuse.”

Right before he finished speaking, Lydia outright rejected him.

Edgar showed an unusually troubled expression, which instantly made Lydia think that she might have been in the wrong instead.

No, the wrong person is him.

“Lydia, I don't remember what happened last night, but I did remember thinking you were the only one for me, and that I absolutely did not hold my usual frivolous attitude with you. I really like you, and I only want you by my side.”

That's a lie!

“I'm serious. There is only you in my heart.”

Such a thing, you probably say that to anyone.

For you, I'm nothing more than someone who's conveniently helpful and comforting at times. And that's it.

“You can trust me.”

Edgar would prefer to hold Lydia than others probably just because she happened to be next to him or perhaps she understood his grief.

No matter what the reason, Lydia was only regarded as someone else's replacement.

Lydia was about to turn around when Edgar grabbed her shoulders.

“Lydia.”

Edgar wanted to pull her closer to him, but she immediately pushed her hands out to resist.

“Please stop, the one you need is not me... You say you need me, but yet you call out another woman’s name. That is really too much.”

When he heard these words, he couldn't help but look at Lydia in surprise.

“Another woman...? Who was it?”

“If you think about it a little, you should know! She is the most important person in your heart after all.”

Edgar pondered in silence, because he didn't know the answer. But he also didn't want to speak in order to avoid digging his own grave.

Lydia, who was holding back tears, looked at Edgar and finally said:

“Before, when I changed my mind, I wanted to believe you, but you've let me down. So now, I'm not going to believe anything you say anymore. So, please return to your home.”

Lydia picked up the bouquet and crammed it in Edgar’s hands, pushing him out the door before slamming it.

Edgar kept calling her name from outside the door, but her back was against it. Finally, he decided to give up and walked down the stairs. Lydia listened to his footsteps and watched as her tears dropped to the floor.

“Lord Edgar, do you wish to go back?”

Lydia heard her father’s voice.

“Professor, if you don't mind, please accept this bouquet of roses.”

“What?”

Her father seemed to be wary, but he accepted the bouquet of roses!?

“I will visit again.”

You don't have to come again.

Hearing the front door close made her cry even more.

“Lydia, don’t cry.”

The voice came from underneath her bed. And then, she saw the wagging of a furry tail.

"I'm on your side. The Earl sent me a letter set, but I will return it back to him."

Nico slowly crawled out from under the bed; his face wearing the mask Lydia gave him.

Lydia couldn't help but laugh, putting her tears to a halt.

"Hey, don't laugh!"

"No, but you're so cute... I mean, you are very handsome."

"Am I? Then, I am the mysterious phantom thief. I'll even wear the cloak more often."

On his hind feet, he took small steps towards Lydia. She rubbed her eyes to wipe away her tears. Then, she squatted down and held his hands.

"Thank you, Nico, I'm fine now."

As the day went by, the less time there was left for Edgar as he thought about Banshee's prophecy coming true: 'you can only live up to three days'. In his heart, he was glad that, fortunately, nothing happened between him and Lydia. Despite rushing to ask her to marry him, she would've been hurt if she found out about Banshee's prophecy.

As long as it was related to Lydia, Edgar couldn't carefully think about what to do next.

From the beginning, he has always made mistakes, but it seemed to be more frequent lately.

Edgar knew why in his heart he was hesitating, but that misunderstanding couldn't be cleared with Lydia. It seemed it only made her misunderstanding of him grow worse and worse.

"Lord Edgar, you wished to see us?"

Raven and Ermine entered his study.

Even though right now he was unable to clear Lydia's misunderstandings to gain back her trust, Edgar still had unfinished business to take care of. So, he had to make the most with what remaining time he had.

Therefore, he regained his composure as he ordered the two:

"Leave this note at the house where Paul was found."

Edgar gave a signed letter to Ermine.

"I know where the amber is, come and collect it.' That is what's written in the

letter.”

The two servants were not surprised, and they quietly waited for Edgar’s next command.

Edgar saying he found the amber was a bluff to lure Ulysses out and to take the next step by challenging him alone.

“I know the whereabouts of the amber, but how to find it or where it is, is the most important information I cannot tell anyone. But I'm going use this to negotiate with Ulysses.

“Lord Edgar, isn't this too risky? Ulysses has magical powers.”

Ermine’s tone of voice and facial expressions remained neutral.

“I’ll use my mind to win. Do you think Ulysses will win over me?”

“... If you say so.”

Ermine nodded, but her heart didn't really think so. Regardless, that was all irrelevant.

“Ermine, this letter, can you deliver it?”

“Yes.”

“Raven, I'm going to visit Slade’s club, come with me.”

Ermine left as Raven remained with Edgar.

Edgar stared at him, while Raven did not move, waiting for his master’s command.

In order to protect the loyal servant, Edgar sincerely hoped to use the rest of his time making the best of this moment with Raven. Raven did not open his heart to anyone but Edgar, so as long as he focused on this, he will probably not be manipulated by Prince.

“Raven, I confide in you as a friend, do you understand?”

“Yes.”

“Lydia and Tomkins also treat you as a normal being and care for you.”

Raven seemed confused as he looked at Edgar and asked:

“Miss Lydia is not angry with me?”

“Well, she is only angry with me.”

“But, earlier, it was my fault.”

“Never mind that, Lydia can understand how you feel... Oh, by the way, Raven,

can you think of any woman's name I could have said in my sleep?"

"I know." Raven answered.

"Please... Tell me."

"Should I say the list in alphabetical order?"

"... I'll pass."

He visited Slade's club today because he remembered how he was drunk yesterday. However, there was still one thing that remained in his heart.

Edgar took Raven inside the club room, where the Scarlet Moon and Paul were waiting in the hall entrance for him.

This was a male-entry only club, so even if Ermine wasn't here, she wouldn't suspect anything, which made it a perfect place to meet.

"Lord Edgar, did you mean this painting?"

An old painting was brought into the room for Edgar to look over. It was a portrait of a young girl holding a shield, which Edgar was very fond of.

"The painter's name isn't there. Do you know who painted it?"

The painting had a small, square frame, with only a length of eight inches on each side. Edgar held the whole painting in his hands while carefully observing it.

"Well... Though it was in my father's things, these strokes are not his. It was probably his friend who had asked him to keep it."

Paul explained to Edgar.

"Why, among your father's possessions, is only this painting part of the club's collection?"

"Because I couldn't find out the name of the painter, I believed it was important. I heard that the club's guests had foreign appraisers, so I had the portrait mailed here to Slade a few days ago."

"In the end, we couldn't figure out who the painter was. But because there's a lack of décor in the club, I'm going to hang it in my pool room."

"Lord Edgar, is there something wrong with the painting?"

Edgar nodded, and then gently placed the painting back on the table.

"I have never seen this painting before, but I think it should be hung back at the Sylvainford manor mansion."

“Oh, did the Duke of Sylvainford give this to my father?”

“I don’t know whether your father found out about Prince’s plot, but the Duke knew that he was being targeted by Prince. When he sensed that a crisis was to occur, he probably felt it was important that the painting remained in O’Neill’s care. O’Neill originally had nothing to do with the Duke and the Blue Knight Earl. Perhaps that was why he was killed by the Prince’s minions.”

“You mean the amber is in the painting here?”

Slade immediately started to investigate the painting.

Just as he was about to remove the frame, he suddenly remembered something and stopped.

“Right, this painting does not have a frame, so there can’t be any amber in it.”

“So, it can only be in the actual painting?”

“Yes.”

Edgar was so disappointed that he sat down in a chair nearby, seemingly wanting to give up.

“However, this painting is very strange. How should I say, the composition is not very good.”

As an art dealer, Slade agreed with Paul.

Indeed, Edgar thought it lacked a sense of balance. Compared to the girl, the silver shield stood out more so.

“It’s as if the shield was the focus of the whole portrait.”

Upon closer inspection, the shield had spiral patterns, consisting of coiled-lines and complex patterns everywhere, like lines of text.

“Above here is a message, right? As you can see, this letter is G, this is A, D, Y... GLADYS? Ashenbert?”

Edgar read the letters, and then turned to Slade.

“Bring me a magnifying glass.”

Slade quickly left and immediately returned not long after.

With the oil lamps on, Edgar started reading word-by-word. Paul began recording as Edgar read out the letters and words. Words that were missing letters were searched further, in case they were written somewhere else.

When Edgar followed the blue lines of the word-search pattern, he found that it

was actually a hidden message.

The luxurious saloon was filled with gentlemen who arrived there at night, speaking of irrelevant things while happily drinking. Laughter was heard from time to time. But, in the midst of it all, outside the saloon was a room separated by a wall where three people sat in an air full of tension.

In the room, the only sounds heard were Edgar's voice reading the letter sounds and the scribbling of Paul's pencil recording each letter.

The text was densely squeezed in the silver shield on the canvas. After Edgar copied the whole passage, he read it out loud:

"In 1747, to curse the world, the Prince of Calamity and the evil fairy made a contract. I will try my best to drive away the evil spirits out of Britain, but as Banshee predicted, my life would soon be in peril. However, the fate of the future would be determined by this moment. The Prince of Calamity will one day return to England. I, who inherited the power of the Blue Knight Earl, am the only one in my family who can cut off the Prince's blood and bury the evil spirit. I sincerely hope for the emergence of a new heir to inherit the Ashenbert name. Gladys Ashenbert."

The three people were silent for a moment.

"The disastrous Prince, the Prince from America?"

"But that was 100 years ago. Lord Edgar, is Prince that old?"

Prince was neither young nor old by a logical sense. But he was probably struggling to live through the lives of his descendants.

"All in all, whoever wrote this passage 100 years ago was definitely the Blue Knight Earl - Gladys, or supposedly the woman in the painting."

In other words, she forced the evil Prince out of England to die of exhaustion?

"Then, that could only mean that the Blue Knight Earl's bloodline was cut off due to her death. And she perhaps knew that there would be no heir, so she left this message out of hope."

"Therefore, she wanted someone to inherit the Earl's powers, even if he was not blood-related..."

It was puzzling to find that, even the Earl's powers couldn't stop the Prince? The birth of the Prince involved fairy magic which led to this incident, it seemed.

The Blue Knight Earl's family was familiar with fairy magic, but the current house of the Earl has less power, so it is simply impossible to fight against Prince.

Gladys sincerely looked forward to the next heir of the Blue Knight Earl. Therefore, she was the key to the Blue Knight Earl's power, along with the memories of Banshee which were sealed in Amber. Banshee's Amber is the shield which protects from Prince's conspiracy.

If the amber reaches the hands of Ulysses, then he will inherit the Earl's name, and the world can no longer avoid the Prince's destruction.

Edgar had to find the amber before it fell into Ulysses' hands.

There was another thing that Edgar worried a little about, though.

Gladys wanted to sever the Prince's bloodline. Assuming that he'll be the Blue Knight Earl, in order to eliminate the Prince, he had to sever all blood relations to the Prince. However, did that mean Edgar needed to be killed as well?

During the glorious revolution, Stuart James II was driven out of England. The Prince may have been one of his descendants. James II's immediate bloodline should have already been cut off, but in order for the Prince to live on, he needed those who were blood-related to him. Therefore, he targeted Edgar's mother.

Edgar's mother had very strong blood ties to James II and the crowned Bonnie Prince Charlie. But then she later married Duke Sylvainford, Edgar's father - the Duke originally next-in-line in the royal family, who also had close ties to the Stuart. She and Sylvainford had a child after marriage: Edgar, who had a bloodline related to the Royal family and to Prince. Therefore, Edgar was the ideal successor for the Prince. Then it may be a shortcut to take away his own life for Prince's destruction.

This was Banshee's death prophecy.

Not to mention, there was also Ermine's suspicious behaviour.

Edgar felt like he was facing different obstacles in his life.

If he was truly unworthy of being the Blue Knight Earl, he should at least play the part and try to stop Ulysses and Prince.

To be worthy of the title, he needed to find the amber and restore Banshee's

memories.

This, Edgar could do.

Perhaps, to accept death is the most important thing I can do.

As Edgar thought that, his heart yearned for Lydia.

He didn't care if he was dead. He was ready to die at any time, but the thought of Lydia stopped him.

Fortunately, nothing happened between him and Lydia. She didn't have to become a widow and could avoid being called an impure girl.

So Edgar gave up on the marriage, but it seemed this made Lydia think that the marriage was a joke.

She thought Edgar was only trying to take responsibility, so then, to her, it felt like she was being forced to marry him. However, because the two were innocent, Edgar could no longer force Lydia to stay by his side, not to mention he couldn't tell her Banshee's prophecy.

"Lord Edgar, what do you plan to do next?"

Paul's voice disrupted his thoughts about Lydia, and he returned back to reality.

"Send this painting back to my manor."

"Yes, I understand."

"Slade, can you try to find the amber... Paul, Banshee trusts you so if she returns to you, work together with Lydia to protect her."

Paul held a surprised expression saying, Banshee will come back? But he still nodded at Edgar's commands.

Along with Raven, Edgar left the club through the hallway.

Like last night, the snow kept falling down from the dark sky.

The London streets were so foggy that, even with the oil lamps shining, it was still hazy to the eyes and the footsteps were unclear. When Edgar walked up the steps of his carriage, a black carriage suddenly stopped in front of him, as if it came from the darkness.

Raven went immediately hostile. He held up a knife to protect Edgar, while at the same time, the carriage opened, and a boy of 10 years old walked out.

"Oh? Jimmy, you're still alive?"

The pale young boy heard Edgar, and then gave him a malicious smile.

The boy was one of Ulysses' comrades. He was not a human but a Hellhound. He was once severely bitten by Kelpie, so he should have been killed, but he had appeared yet again.

"Lord, I have come to escort you. Our host is expecting your visit."

It appeared the letter was delivered to Ulysses' hands.

He moves fast, Edgar muttered. He patted Raven's shoulder, stopping him from rushing forward and from attacking Jimmy. Well, it's possible Ermine directly gave Ulysses the letter, so it cannot be said if it was the other party that reacted quickly.

"Can you please follow while the others stay?"

Edgar initially expected things to turn out like this, and he didn't intend to let Raven go to the enemy.

Therefore, Edgar immediately nodded.

"Lord Edgar, do not put your life at risk."

Jimmy looked disgusted and murderous, so Raven kept a distance. Because Raven was human, it was impossible for him to harm a demon.

Of course, Edgar wasn't going to die easily, but if Ulysses found out that he didn't have the amber, Edgar didn't know what he were to do. Even if Ulysses didn't kill him, Edgar didn't have much time left, so this was quite a gamble.

"Raven, I must go. So, let me go."

Raven was silent, but he was unable to stop Edgar. Perhaps it was because, in his heart, he was too confused.

In the end, Edgar went into the carriage alone, and Jimmy the Hellhound closed the carriage door.

"Lydia, tonight's moon is very nice. Let's play."

In the middle of the night, Kelpie knocked on the door. Lydia was half-asleep and heard his call. So, she rolled over.

What are you saying. It's snowing outside, the whistling wind keeps blowing, and I cannot even see the moon.

Then again, I'm trying to sleep.

"... That's not right."

Surprised, Lydia found that she was already on the black horse's back, moving

at great speed, across the moonlit prairie. She felt a fragrant breeze gently brush her cheek, but there was no snow.

Am I dreaming?

Even though Kelpie intruded into her dream, it felt like her world expanded. Lydia was enveloped by a mysterious power. No matter how fast Kelpie ran, she never felt as if she would fall at all.

After crossing the prairie, a hill appeared full of blooming, vibrant flowers.

At this point, Kelpie stopped running. Lydia gently dismounted off the horse and walked toward the colorful hill.

She noticed a fairy circle where small flower fairies were dancing. As she watched, she couldn't help but smile.

“Are you having fun?”

“Ah, it’s so beautiful~!”

Kelpie turned into a human and stood beside Lydia.

“That’s good.”

He slightly tilted and hugged Lydia’s head to his chest. When she lifted her head up, she saw the tall Kelpie, with his black curly hair that shone in the moonlight. Kelpie suddenly looked down at her and wrapped his arms around her.

“.... What’s the matter?”

Kelpie couldn't understand why or what it meant for humans to hug each other, but he held Lydia in his arms anyway. He knew how much it made her happy. Though he didn't understand the love between humans, he cherished Lydia in his own way.

“As long as I hold you, I always get a wonderfully calm feeling. But, at the same time, my heart is racing. I lived for so long, but this is the first time I felt this.”

“Is that so?”

“What do you feel?”

Lydia felt as if she was wrapped in calm, flowing water.

Just as she thought, with Edgar, it was completely different.

But then, that was because Kelpie and Edgar were so different. When she’s with Kelpie, she never felt pain or sadness because he would never lie or go back on his word.

“Lydia, let’s go to the moon next.”

“Go to the moon next? No way, I can’t fly.”

“Yes, you can.”

At Kelpie’s urging, Lydia hadn't realize they were both standing right next to a lake now, that reflected the moon.

“Let’s go there now.”

“But I can't swim.”

“We’re in a dream. Not to mention I'm here with you, so you don’t have to worry about that.”

Kelpie took her hand and went down into the lake.

Lydia’s heart felt a little uneasy, and when they started entering the waters, she felt uncomfortable. But, she knew Kelpie wouldn't eat her.

Not to mention that this was a dream. If she woke up, everything would disappear anyway.

“My Lady, please stop here!”

At this point, Lydia didn't know where the voice came from.

She stopped, and a small piece of haystack struggled towards her feet.

“You mustn't follow Kelpie into the water!”

Wearing a tall, crooked hat, with a messy beard was Coblynau who fell down.

Not even caring, he hurriedly got up and once again tried to persuade Lydia.

“He’s trying to draw you into the fairy world under water. Once you go, you can never return to the human world!”

Kelpie clicked his tongue.

“Shut up, shorty! Lydia, let’s go.”

“Kelpie, wait a minute. Then, those fairy circles I passed by earlier, weren't they all a dream?”

“What does it matter?”

“It would be horrible if I can’t return to the human world, obviously!”

Lydia took a step back, leaving the lake until Kelpie suddenly grabbed her hand.

“I'm not going to let you stay on the Earl's side. He can't protect you.”

“You, what are you saying?”

“I believe he’s no match for Ulysses, and if he can’t even protect himself, he’s

not a man.”

Kelpie looked directly into her eyes, emitting his magic. He never used the magic in his eyes on her before.

“As long as you’re by his side, there is not one day that goes by where you could not be killed. So, I will not sit down idly and do nothing, because I don’t want to lose you!”

Lydia was deeply taken by Kelpie’s magic and began to slowly walk toward the lake.

“Kelpie, you mustn't do this! That’s the Blue Knight Earl’s wife!”

“Shut, up. I already confirmed that she’s not wearing the moonstone ring.”

That was true. Edgar had taken off the moonstone ring.

But if Lydia and Kelpie were together in the fairy world, Edgar probably wouldn't even mind.

“I'm serious. There’s only you in my heart.”

Edgar’s tone was so serious, his words rung in Lydia’s mind.

But, he probably only said it on a whim.

As Lydia recalled that moment, her pace began to slow down. Coblynau took this chance to quickly climb on her skirt.

As he climbed, he took out the moonstone ring.

“My Lady, hurry! Put on the ring!”

“You are really annoying! Who cares about the marriage, anyway. The Earl only has a few days left to live.”

Lydia couldn't help but stop.

“... What did you just say?”

“Well, he couldn't burn Banshee’s tears. So, it seems he’s not the only Earl out there? Anyway, as soon as he dies, the engagement would be pointless. Lydia, you’re still going with me in case his death makes you sad.”

Is Edgar going to die? Did he predict his death from the banshee’s ambers?

This is not why he took off the engagement ring from my hand, right?

Edgar suddenly said he wanted to get married in three days, and after knowing that nothing happened between them, he gave up.

Or maybe it had nothing to do with the prophecy, and it was just on a whim.

But he had asked Lydia if Banshee's prediction was going to be fulfilled, so he was prepared to die.

"Kelpie, I have to go back."

"Lydia, don't worry about that guy. You will only be used!"

Kelpie was right.

Even though she believed that too, she still placed the moonstone ring on her ring finger.

She was released from Kelpie's magic and vanished from the lake.

As Lydia's dream faded, Kelpie then let go of her hand.

"Why?"

Yes, why?

Because I'm the Earl's fairy doctor... But is it really just for this reason?

She herself was puzzled. As she slowly opened her eyes, she found herself lying in her bed, staring at the familiar ceiling.

Lydia finally woke up from her dream, and wearily sat up.

"Ahh, that was close. That's great."

On Lydia's knee was Coblynau, who was contentedly caressing the moonstone on her ring finger.

"Little Bow told me that my Lady was in danger, and so I went into your dream and found Kelpie trying to take you away."

Now, it was no longer night but early morning.

Lydia quickly climbed out of her bed.

# Chapter 6 - The golden-haired noblewoman

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Despite it being early in the morning, the Earl's servants of the manor were already up and working. Lydia knocked on the front door, and the one who answered the door was Ermine.

She hesitated before immediately smiling nervously.

After all, Ermine's betrayal to Edgar has yet been decided.

Lydia, who rushed from her house in a hurry, forgot that she ended up arriving to work earlier than usual. Because of that, she tried to come up with a reason for her strange behavior.

"Ah, that is ... it's really embarrassing, to come running in so early the morning, I'm sorry....."

Lydia tried to think of a reason to explain but before she could finish speaking Ermine opened her mouth to say:

"Miss Lydia, I was just about to go to your home to visit."

"Eh, why?"

"Lord Edgar went away to see Ulysses<sup>[1]</sup> men."

Lydia was so shocked that she was speechless. Ermine continued to quickly explain what happened.

Last night, after Edgar left Slade's Club, Jimmy the hellhound immediately appeared in front of Raven and carried off Edgar. Moreover, it seemed Edgar decided he must go to the enemy himself.

Lydia thought, Edgar must have been thinking of Banshee's prophecy.

"Raven and the members of the 'Scarlet Moon' had split up in order to find where Ulysses was possibly hiding. Later on, I'll also have to join them in their search."

"Where's Sir Paul?"

She heard that Paul had temporarily left his home to stay at Earl's manor, so she asked Ermine where he was.

Paul was one of the “Scarlet Moon” members. Clearly, he was aware of the situation regarding Ermine’s wrongdoings.

Lydia needed to discuss with someone what to do next, and so there was no other person but Paul.

“You said Sir Paul? He has closed himself in his room. His guest room is around the right side of the second floor.”

Lydia was relieved to hear Paul was still at the manor, so she immediately visit the room as Ermine described.

Lydia knocked on the door several times, but no one responded. Moreover, the door was locked on the other side.

“Sir Paul, it’s Lydia.”

After knocking on the door a third time, it finally gently opened a crack.

At first, Paul took a glance all around. Once he confirmed it was only Lydia, he hastily asked her to come in before closing the door and locking it.

“Oh, please don’t misunderstand. There is a reason for.... Well anyway, I have an important secret to tell you.”

Paul said. At the same time, he walked over to a nearby bookshelf and beckoned Lydia to come with his hand.

“Yesterday, we made a recent discovery. It appears Duke Sylvainford trusted my father to safe keep a painting. In fact, it was one hundred years ago when this portrait of Lady Gladys was entrusted under the hands of the Duke family. ”

Edgar’s real family name---- Sylvainford, was a historic ancestral line of aristocrats. Ashenbert was also an ancient family name of nobles, so had there been contact between the two families, it was not surprising.

After listening to Paul explain the hidden message in the painting, she felt it was very strange.

---Certainly, no one could have imagined it.

Unexpectedly, with the Ashenbert family lacking a successor, the last survivor of the Sylvainford family inherited the title and became the Earl of Ashenbert.

“Miss Lydia, I think the picture is hiding other messages as well, such as the amber’s whereabouts. But though I looked for a long time, I didn’t see anything.”

Edgar went to the enemy and wanted to challenge Ulysses himself. So, Paul was probably hoping to find the amber as soon as possible. It could aid Edgar in giving a more favorable bargain.

Indeed, if the amber was hidden somewhere, this painting would be a vital key. "I understand, Sir Paul. In order to be of help, I want to quickly find the amber, but I also need to confirm something with Banshee.... As long as you can find Banshee's magical amber, there is a way to be by her side."

Then, Lydia began to carefully study the portrait.

In the picture was a lady with long hair, holding a shield. Although she was not dressed in helmet and body armor, the majestic-looking knight was worthy of being called the Blue Knight Earl's last descendant.

The First Blue knight --- Gladys, was the Earl's wife. She was born from aes sidhe, a fine-beautiful race of fairies who were descendants of the gods that used to wander with the living in the human world. One of their descendants must be the woman in the portrait, the one with dazzling golden hair Lady Galdys. Any person couldn't help but believe her to be a descendant of the aes sidhe<sup>[2]</sup>.

"Oh~~ this painting is too perfect for words."

Next came the voice of Coblynau. After he spoke, his head immediately peeped out from Lydia's coat hat.

"You came with me!?"

"This lapis lazuli color is a brilliant bright blue, and this peacock green is an excellent choice, too."

Coblynau was staring very closely at the portrait. It seemed he was just interested in the mineral pigments used.

"Coblynau, we are discussing a very important matter. You can leave first, okay?"

"But little Bow said I may be able to help the young lady with a favor, so I came along."

Coblynau made a small bow above the moonstone ring.

"My lady, how can I help? "

Even if you ask me, I don't know.

“Well ..... Oh, that's right! You can find hidden gems, can't you?”

“Only the gems I have ever seen.”

It seems there is really no hope. Especially since this may have been the first time Coblynau and Banshee met.

“However --- ooh there are these gems I do know. ”

Coblynau proudly boasted. This guy is really a headache.

As Lydia pondered as to what to do, Coblynau continued to say:

“For example, as for this amber, no matter what the color or gloss it may be, it is said to still be a masterpiece.”

“Amber!?”

Lydia and Paul cried out in unison.

Paul couldn't see the invisible goblin so Coblynau felt confused. However, Paul still placed his hand on the table where Coblynau's originally voice came from. Leaning his body forward, Paul anxiously asked:

“Mr. fairy, excuse me, but where is the amber? ”

“Here, in the dame's golden hair.”

“No kidding! This golden-yellow pigment unexpectedly is.....”

For Paul, it seemed to be no small matter, in which he was speechless for a moment. And then, while holding his head, he regretfully said:

“Ah~ I'm a painter, how did I not even notice such things! Miss Lydia, most ordinary people do not use amber as a pigment. Having it grounded into small powder and spread across the canvas is truly luxurious. Especially since this color is normally displayed by agate instead. Well ~~ actually because agate has a variety of hues, its value is subjective to painters. Ah... ...but how can it be, most people may see this as red paint on the canvas, but rather, does not one think it could be ruby? Incredible, to actually use precious gems as a pigment... Because I was too poor, I simply never thought of it!”

Lydia, who approached close to the painting, was steadily staring at the quality of the woman's golden hair.

It's probably just in my mind, but I always felt that blond hair looks particularly bright and glistening.

“.....So, these are Banshee's tears...? ”

“Certainly right, Miss Lydia. Not to mention, there is probably no other possible answer.”

Lydia nodded.

“My lady, did I help you? ”

“Yes, thank you, Coblynau.”

Lydia gave a satisfied smile. Then, Coblynau sat on the table and took out a pipe to smoke.

“Sir Paul, can I borrow the painting? ”

“Of course, but what do you plan on doing with it? ”

“I want to bring it to Banshee. If she is in Ulysses’s hiding place, Edgar must certainly also be there. So, I’ll try to bring back Banshee and Edgar together.”

Lydia put the small painting in her coat and then immediately changed direction to look at Coblynau.

“Coblynau, help me open the fairy portal. You should do it.”

“My lady, I can open the portal, but I will not be able to show you the way. If one were to get lost in the middle, they cannot come again again. You would have to find Nico. He can lead you better than a goblin escort.”

“But he’s not underneath the bed, so he probably ran out to play. Time is pressing, and I really can’t wait for him to come back. As long as I have the amber with me, I should undoubtedly reach Banshee’s side.”

“Yes, I know that.” Coblynau jumped down from the table and began digging holes in the floor. Soon, a dark hole beneath the carpet appeared. Confused, Paul watched the scene before him.

“Well, Miss Lydia, can I travel together with you? ”

“I cannot guarantee that an accident won’t happen.”

“But I cannot let a girl like you risk going alone.”

Paul was a man with a sense of justice. Even if Lydia urged him to stay behind, he wouldn’t obediently listen.

Besides, if Paul went, he may have a better chance of persuading Banshee to come back.

After Lydia nodded in consent, Paul, like a gentleman, took the lead into the dark cave.

Raven was crossing back and forth a number of times across the intersections of streets and back alleyways, with every turn being full of doubt.

He chased after Edgar's carriage last night but then ended up lost. Raven saw the coach turning here, but when he reached the corner, the carriage disappeared as if it was one with the darkness.

This was obviously a straight path. Even if the carriage was going at high speeds, it should still be clearly seen. Therefore, Raven couldn't understand how the carriage disappeared.

"What are you doing? Did you drop something?" There came a voice of sophistry. Raven looked at his feet to see a woolly-grey cat, standing on two hind legs and looking up at him.

The gray cat was wearing an ornate mask on his face. Raven held no expression, but inside he was a little bit confused.

"...Are you Sir Nico?"

"I am the mysterious phantom thief."

Raven, who couldn't understand, didn't think much more of it. Not to mention, in regards to Edgar, it was simply not necessary to think anymore.

So, he bluntly answered Nico's question:

"Lord Edgar is gone, and I can only describe that he disappeared. I am very much troubled."

"He disappeared here?"

"Yes."

Nico slowly turned behind him, glanced at Raven in the eyes, and motioned for him to follow.

There was a cat wearing a masked, covered with a cloak, walking on two hind feet on the street, but it did not attract the attention of any passersby. Perhaps he was able to hide his breath like stealth.

Nico was really in front of him, but it was like a looming shadow. Had Raven not noticed, he would have struck the gray tail off of him.

Raven, as not to lose him, was intently following Nico when Nico suddenly stopped.

"Oh, there is a crack."

“What crack?”

“The space between the human world and the fairy world. It is somewhat distorted but, from the goblin’s cracks, you can enter through the gateway”

However, Raven couldn’t actually see the crack that Nico spoke of.

“How do you get through this gateway? I must go look for Lord Edgar.”

“Humans can't go in.”

“But Lord Edgar disappeared here.”

“Yes. However, that was only because there was someone that could lead him?”

After Raven pondered for a while, he then asked:

“Can you do it?”

“That goes without saying.”

“Sir Nico, please show me the way.”

“I can only open the gateway for Lydia. If you wish to speak of this anymore, you can but you can’t rely on your own to get through the place oh, I just won’t help you.”

“In that case, I will lead Raven myself.”

When did Ermine come to their side, he did not know.

“It doesn’t matter who opens the gateway, right?”

Although, for a moment, Raven looked at Ermine in confusion. But all of the sudden, the air became filled with tension all around, causing Nico to become stiff.

“Ah, well, by that reason, I suppose it’s okay.”

“Sir Nico, Miss Lydia and Sir Ferman disappeared. My guess is that they entered the goblin’s tunnel. If Edgar was taken by Ulysses through the goblin’s tunnel, then there is a high chance Miss Lydia will find him.”

When Nico heard that Lydia went to find Edgar, he couldn’t help but feel anxious. He scratched his head and muttered complaints:

“What did you say!? Lydia really, after crying about him, now she’s still worrying about him, what is she thinking.”

However, he immediately pulled himself together and waved to Raven and Ermine.

“I’ve got no choice. Raven, you need stick close to your sister. Once you get lost, you can never return to the human world.”

Ermine held Raven’s hand tight.

“Then, let’s go.”

Then, Raven remembered, when they were younger, he would walk hand-in-hand across the road with his sister. It was a wonderful feeling. But immediately after he thought that, he felt now was not the time to think such a thing.

There were very narrow cracks between the buildings. As if they were being sucked in, instead of the snow trails, they instantly appeared in a field of spring wilderness.

Edgar waited a very long time in a room of the building.

He didn’t know why there were two slender, crescent moons in the window. But right now, he was not in the mood to be astonished for this sort of thing.

He was originally looking out the foggy London street, until the scenery suddenly changed. At lightning speed, the fog dissipated, and he was overseeing countless stars that shone across the green grasslands.

After passing a few hills, he was brought into an isolated tower. The second moon rose in the sky, and a certain period of time had passed. The pocket watch was already still.

All of the fairy world was too distorted for Edgar to understand, so he decided not to think about it.

In short, as long as it was related to fairies, Edgar knew it was Ulysses’ win. But since Edgar doesn’t use magic, he had his own way against Ulysses.

When there was a knock on the door, Edgar was sitting in the chair inside the room, neither answering nor standing up.

Even when he didn’t respond, the other side had the key to open the door anyway. After it opened, Ulysses walked in.

“My lord, I welcome you here.”

“Pardon my hospitality. This building is quite worn-out so the floors let out creaking sounds.”

“Oh, is that so? You seem to be in an unpleasant mood. Is it because I let you wait for so long?”

“It’s because I see your face.”

Ulysses maintained his faint smile as he slowly walked in front of Edgar sitting in the chair.

“Today, you coming here was my personal decision. I had hoped that before His Highness arrived to England, we can resolve our private problems.”

He was referring to who should be the real heir to the earl, the Blue Knight Earl.

“This matter was already decided a long time ago. I received the Merrow’s Sword and be formally recognized as the Earl of Ibrazel in the country. You say you’re the descendant of the 300 year old Earl Julius --- You, the bastard offspring of Ashenbert? This kind of matter, no one would simply believe. You will only be treated as the offspring of a mistress. There is no right for a common civilian to gain a free title of nobility.”

Edgar deliberately uttered these words to provoke Ulysses, whose face completely changed. Not even bothering to keep the facade of a smile, his face revealed his extreme displeasure.

“You really understand my upbringing.”

“The Merrows mentioned it to me. That should have been your father, correct? Although he called upon the Merrows to surrender the sword, he was unable to solve the last verse of their poem. In return, he ruined their lives into rubbish within the sea.”

“Oh, Lord, that was actually me, and I did not take their lives away at sea.”

“Ah yes, his name was Ulysses, but you are also called Ulysses. However, I heard that the one beside Prince was not this little boy. The one the Merrows met with, was a grown middle-aged man.”

Ulysses unexpectedly let out a laugh and then said these words that left Edgar puzzled.

“At the time, you looked as if you just happened to be chosen as Prince. But that moment was deeply imprinted in my mind. You were the one with your parents murdered. Stolen away and thrown into a cargo ship bound for America, you were looking utterly tragic. Just living a miserable life in the slums, homeless. You were so weak it was as if you were ready to die. I really couldn’t believe that little boy was so unexpectedly important to his Royal Highness.”

Edgar was so physically weak that he almost lost consciousness that time. So, even if he didn't remember, Ulysses coming from the Prince's orders to investigate on him was not surprising.

But by going by that time frame, Ulysses should have only been 5 or 6 years old. For some reason, his tone of voice implied that he was an adult when he saw Edgar.

"But, Lord Edgar, when I reached out to you, to make sure you were still alive, even though you were nearly unconscious, you still slapped my hand away. It was really quite the surprise for me. The you, who seemed to strongly refuse touching those inferior to you. You, the son of the Duke family, were naturally born to accept the respect people invested in you. From that moment, I realized you couldn't bare to tolerate being subjected to improper behavior. Even at a mere touch, you showed such anger and arrogance despite your life being near to death. From then, I knew you were worthy of being our highest, the Royal Highness."

Edgar was kidnapped in order to be a puppet for the Prince.

Prince, who was the leader of some strange secret organization, wanted to shape Edgar into the next Prince and sabotage his being.

After Edgar recovered from his near-death experience, he continued to endure with even darker memories of his time in America. From the start, he even had to face unbearable mental torture that was far worse than his physical abuse.

And Ulysses's words brought back these memories. Although he pretended to be calm, Edgar felt cold sweat.

But he went on to utter:

"So you say you have been around Prince since then? That you followed him as a child? Don't be deluded."

"Because this is my second body."

After he heard this, Edgar couldn't hide his astonishment. Ulysses calmly gave him a mocking smile. But this smile was mixed with strong anger against Edgar.

"The Blue Knight Earl's blood has been cut off. Since 300 years ago --- after Earl Julius Ashenbert died, he had given birth to no male heir, so there was no one who went to England to retrieve the Merrows' Sword. Then, at long last, there

was only the earl's remaining female descendant, Lady Gladys Ashenbert, had died 100 years ago. And at this, the Royal Highness marked the end of the earl's wretched bloodline."

".....but he left you alive."

"Indeed. At this point, the only one left of the Blue Knight Earl's sons is me. Only I can reach the hidden place of the Merrows sword, and that is from the two keys in the Royal Highness's hands. After all, it was the ancestor of the illegitimate child who produced these keys. In other words, the one who made these keys in order to conceal the Merrow's sword was none other than Julius Ashenbert's lover. One of them was the golden key which held a simple design. Therefore, imitations could be found everywhere during the past 300 years. However, there has only been one silver key. Because of its delicate structure, it couldn't be imitated. But then later on, you stole it, do you remember."

At the time, Edgar was planning his escape. So, he was trying to scope through all the details relating to Prince. Initially, he really didn't know what it was for. He understood the Prince could not fight. However, most of the things related to Prince were a mystery.

Edgar thought the key must've been important, so he decided to take it.

It was after his escape from Prince's clutches when he accidentally found out the purpose of the key. It gave him the chance to become the Earl Ashenbert. That was also why he involved Lydia to go to the Manon Island.

"You clearly didn't have the key, yet you dared to take the risk of venturing out to Manon Island?"

"The key was made by my ancestors, so their blueprints had certainly remained. Of course you can make a new one. If otherwise, even had Prince stopped me, I would've cut you to pieces."

"However, even if you had the key, the Merrows wouldn't have given you the sword, because you couldn't even understand the meaning of the poem's riddle, am I wrong?"

Edgar's words were right on the mark. Ulysses was shaken up. Angered, he unconsciously stood up.

With his second body, he wanted so badly to shake Edgar for such inexplicit

words, but he hadn't expected to lose his composure like this.

"Was the answer not to sacrifice blood? These damn Merrows desired the soul of a human, so I had also especially prepared a victim for them."

Initially, Edgar also believed this to be the answer.

But when Lydia stood in front of him, it made his heart hesitate.

For a long time, Edgar was living in a ruthless, callous world. He had forgotten his sense of justice and compassion for others. But Lydia, she made him think back to all of it. Even when she knew Edgar was using her, she still tried to share his pain. Even as a fairy doctor, she would always help others.

If one wanted to become the Earl of that sword, acting as the leader of a bandit group did not work. For this reason, he couldn't sacrifice Lydia. Moreover, it was impossible for the Blue Knight Earl himself to sacrifice another life to unravel the mystery of the poem. Though Edgar understood this, he still didn't know the answer. But he was remembering at the time, if he wasn't able to solve the puzzle, then everyone there would die. That was why, before that time, he was to protect Raven and Lydia together.

He believed in that, because he remembered his obligations as a noble. Even if he was unlucky in his life, he couldn't forget his responsibility.

If you want to beat Ulysses, he could only rely on this. As Edgar reaffirmed this, he eyed the teen and observed.

Compared to Edgar's calm, collected manner, Ulysses seemed anxious. He was ready to pour out scornful words filled with repressed anger and resentment.

"Why? The Blue Knight Earl's successor is clearly only me! Those damned Merrows set off rough waves to attack me and unexpectedly drag me into the sea. I was pushed up and down the rough sea waves, and crashed into rock in the billow before drowning in a tragedy."

From what Ulysses said, was that how he lost his first body? If so, then the man who appeared before the Merrows really was dead.

Edgar couldn't understand if the boy was describing the experience from a memory of a willful dead man.

This kind of matter made no sense. However, Edgar did vaguely note, this was the results of the research conducted under the Prince's organization ---

demonic evil research.



The juvenile placed his hands on the table, with his body approaching Edgar's, he continued to say:

"But I did not die afterwards. I obtained a new, younger body and could continued to survive."

".....is that what they let you believe? Were you being educated in that way?"  
"Educated? It was indeed one of the most important aspects, but the main focus is on the soul. Yes, I must speak clearly of this first: this was not cheap,

low magic. Oh, this body and the life in this body completely belongs to me. However, yours is the new body chosen to become his Royal Highness.”

The knowledge by which the person was framed was Prince for certain: mind, speech, and body movement were exact. Even all of his various habits, large and small, were instilled into Edgar. Initially, during the process, Edgar gradually started to lose a sense of himself. Had he continued to stay in the organization, he may have really been in disorder, believing himself to be Prince.

But, because of this strong feeling, he felt he really shouldn't become like Prince. If Prince's past was to enter Edgar's mind, would Edgar believe those to be his own memories, would he become Prince?

Edgar's mind was at chaos. This was confirmed right in front of him by his young Ulysses. He was convinced he was the Ulysses who formerly lost his life before. Even if there really was Prince's soul, is it even possible to transfer his soul into another body? Where does the original soul go from there?

This was so close to being black magic, and Edgar didn't believe in black magic. But if he was not the heir of Prince, but an actual worthy vessel for the transfer of Prince's soul. Then Edgar could finally begin to understand that all of this was an arrangement of a evil-foreboding nightmare, a ritual of black magic.

I was not able to achieve the duty of retrieving the treasured sword. So even I could not do it, let alone others. His Royal Highness told me not to worry for the troublesome Blue Knight Earl will reappear again. Little did I know, I never thought that you, Lord, were the new Blue Knight Earl! ”

Ulysses said this as if it was unbelievable, and perhaps that was the point.

His last bloodline inherited the ability to communicate with fairies, too. But it was Edgar, who wasn't even related to the family, who became Earl.

“Why does it have to be you and not me? You have no knowledge nor can even see the fairies and yet you were unexpectedly able to become the Earl of Ibrazel? I wish I could kill you.”

“Then you'll kill me.”

Edgar's cold eyes watched Ulysses who then became excited. Ulysses took a deep breath to calm himself down and said:

“Do you think I can't do it? I have already consented to his Royal Highness. It was not possible to let any of the Blue Knight Earl's heirs live in this world.”

“Prince should be in need of the royal blood in me. After all, his body is not only handicapped but gradually aging as well. In other words, which matter needs to be considered first? The one who inherited the Blue Knight Earl, should he be eradicated first? Or is it to preserve the body for Prince's rebirth? ”

"His Highness gave me the right to make the final decision. Although your blood is the most ideal to his Highness, there are other ways to obtain a body if needed. I just cannot wait to end your life right now.”

Ulysses pulled out a pistol and placed Edgar at gunpoint.

“Even if you kill me, you won't get Banshee's amber.”

Ulysses was fully aware of that. Moreover, he was hesitant to pull the trigger. It didn't seem as if he intended to do so in the first place.

“I know you want Banshee's amber, because as long as she recovers her memories, she can admit that you are the true Blue Knight Earl. Then, you can lead fairies instead, rather than have an English title. Compared to that, you prefer to manipulate the essence of fairy magic, correct? As a result, I would pose no threat to the Prince anymore, and he wouldn't have to worry that I will gain a power he fears. Furthermore, you can live as Prince thus killing two birds with one stone.”

Edgar deliberately pretended to be disgusted and pushed away the gun in Ulysses' hand.

“I don't wish for you to be happy, but for this meeting, I came to take a gamble with you.”

Edgar took the amber from his coat pocket and placed it on his palm for Ulysses to see.

Ulysses doubtfully gazed at the amber.

This was Banshee's amber. However, it was not Lady Gladys' secret amber. This amber was the one that predicted Edgar's death for it did not burn. But, Edgar figured Ulysses shouldn't be able to notice.

“Did you really quite easily obtain the genuine amber? So, this is your trump card. Oh, as long as the amber is here, I can kill you at any time.”

“You cannot kill me before deciding whether this is the real amber. The only way to determine this is by unlocking Banshee’s seal.”

“What is your purpose for wanting me to unlock the Banshee’s seal ...?”

“If Banshee recovers her memory, she would understand who holds the better position and would therefore know who to choose as her master. If she chooses me, what are you going to do?”

“That is an impossible occurrence.”

“Then, let’s take a gamble. Banshee chooses you, then you kill me, or hand me to Prince. If she chooses me, then I am truly the Blue Knight Earl. I leave here easy while you and Prince wait on the road for ruins.”

Ulysses remained silent, but his expression showed a trace of anxiety. Edgar could not help but feel apprehensive.

In fact, Edgar, who was desperate, didn’t expect Ulysses to be afraid. Is the power of the fairies supporting the Blue Knight Earl really that powerful?

For Ulysses, he couldn’t determine whether or not Gladys shifted the memories of Banshee. He was only aware that something would happen once her memory was unsealed. Therefore, he had to be vigilant.

“..... With your ability, it’s impossible. Even if Banshee recognized you, you still cannot manipulate the fairy's magic" w

hispered Ulysses, who was caught up in his thoughts.

“If you believe that, then there is no reason not to gamble with me.”

In any case, there was no way any of the Earl’s power can go to Prince’s hands. Edgar thought his own power were only because of Raven, the “Scarlet Moon” members, and Lydia.

This is for the sake of the good fairies, and at the same time, the sake of his dearest fairy doctor Lydia.

Of course, Edgar expected Ulysses to be unable to unlock the seal, for Edgar never intended to bet seriously.

Ulysses made a call at the door towards Jimmy who was waiting outside. He came in at once, and Ulysses then gave a hasty order to bring in Banshee.

Lydia and Paul went along the fairy passage, until they reached a room that

seemed to be a part of a building.

The outside of the building and the furnishings inside appeared to belong in the human world. However, outside the window were two slender crescent moons. If that wasn't strange enough, in the night sky, aside from the additional moon, there was nothing else.

The building was surrounded by darkness, as if even the ground did not exist. It was as if the space was connected to the night, the sun never to rise.

“Unexpectedly, did Ulysses create this place?”

Paul spoke to himself. Ulysses must have used the mine goblin's underground lair and London buildings combined.

“Yes, but there is no ground. It appears he didn't carefully prepare this place. Only the outside of the buildings were made by magic, so it will not last long due to the tight pressure pressing inward.”

Ulysses probably created this to make it convenient for his dark demons to move in the night.

Paul was relieved after hearing Lydia explain. Then, he saw something and bent down to pick it up.

“Miss Lydia, it's amber.”

He fell to his feet and began to pick up the beads of amber.

It was everywhere. The two moved forward, following along the trail of amber which led to the door of another room. It wasn't closed, and from the room, they heard faint weeping sound.

A young, fragile girl was sitting on the bed, her shoulders trembling.

“Banshee! What's the matter? Are you hurt?”

Widening her eyes in surprise, Banshee looked to the voice that called her.

“You... How could you.....”

“What horrible thing did Ulysses do to you?”

“Sir Paul..... ! No, no, Ulysses disappeared after the others told me to stay here. He said that you, Sir Paul, was already dead. He told me he killed you and that it was my fault...”

Banshee's tears fell even more. Then Paul went to her side, carefully watching her, he comforted her saying:

"I'm fine. You see, I have so much spirit so don't cry now."

"Good, good."

Banshee quickly wiped away her tears, as her whole face blushed.

Lydia noticed Banshee's shy expression, but Paul remained the same as always. He was completely oblivious to a woman's ways. He seemed to view Banshee as a child, so he kept patting her head.

"Banshee, listen to me, we are here to take you away from this place."

"Yes, that's it. You need to quickly come together with us. We have found a way to restore your memory of amber. Lord Edgar, Earl of Ashenbert, and the fairy doctor can help you remember your past."

"But... but..."

Banshee hesitated. She seemed quite worried about running from Ulysses, who had the Earl's bloodline.

While in her heart, she very much trusted Paul, this was a very difficult decision for her.

In that case, they could only try to convince her further.

"Edgar received the Merrows Sword. Even though you don't feel his power as the Blue Knight Earl --- The Queen of England recognizes him as the Earl of Ibrazel."

Banshee's doubts grew deeper and began thinking.

Lydia continued...

"Banshee, the amber that appeared from your tears did not burn. This was a sign that there would be a death in the family. Therefore, this death notice must be for the one who inherited the title of Earl of Ashenbert. Not Ulysses, right?"

"What! Miss Lydia, is what you said true?"

This even shocked Paul.

That moment, Lydia had no time explain it in detail to Paul and could only nod to him. Then, she proceeded to ask Banshee:

"Edgar is the true Earl. Banshee, please acknowledge him. I still have one more thing to ask you. Is there any way to make the prophecy fail?"

Silent, Banshee did not appear to be thinking but was having trouble trying to

Speak.

"I don't think a prophecy can fail because I did not deliberately cry tears of the prophecy. Rather, the tears itself know the fate of the family members."

Lydia had guessed so, but she didn't want to give up her hope on this.

If Ulysses was in this building, then Edgar was also here. The amber has been found, so as long as Banshee was willing to recognize Edgar as her master, he should have the advantage. With an upper hand in his negotiations with Ulysses, Edgar should be able to escape.

With this, Edgar's death could be stopped from becoming reality.

We must find a way to reach Edgar.

At this point, sounds of footsteps were heard opposite of the stairs, outside. Lydia had no time to think.

"Someone is coming. Hurry and hide."

"Hey, Banshee, Ulysses is looking for you."

Banshee, who heard the sounds outside, hurriedly stood up and replied:

"Yes, Yes, I'll be right over."

Then, she turned back to look at Lydia and Paul with a great, panicked expression.

"There are big Hellhounds around Ulysses. Each is a ferocious demon. Once he finds you, he'll kill you. Ah ..... what should I do, please don't die. Just who am I supposed to trust, who is Lady Gladys hoping for? I'm not able to judge..."

"Banshee, lend me your cloak."

Lydia suddenly came up with an idea.

"We need to act fast!"

Outside the door, the Hellhounds were getting impatient. Lydia quickly changed into Banshee's cloak, wearing the green hood to cover her forehead.

"Miss Lydia, what's your plan?"

Lydia gave Paul the portrait of the amber.

"Sir Paul, I must go find Edgar. Please take Banshee and lead her out of here. As long as you have the portrait, Banshee cannot separate from the amber and stay with you. You can safely leave the fairy passage."

"But in this way, Miss Lydia, you ....."

“I’m a fairy doctor. I can always figure out a way.”

The door was suddenly crushed opened. The order to bring in Banshee, the hellhound could not wait.

Pretending to be Banshee, Lydia pushed him out the door.

“You’re so slow!”

Lydia covered her head completely underneath the hood. The black hellhound, who didn’t suspect a thing, began to move forward.

The building was lighted with candles, and the room was dark. Lydia obeyed the instructions to enter, dimly seeing two shadows.

Fortunately, the faint light in the room covered her face from being seen. The people mistakenly thought she was Banshee, with no suspicion.

Lydia stood still as a man came near her.

“Banshee, it is so good you are safe. I’m here to save you.”

What? Is that Edgar ...?

On impulse, she took a glance from the top of her hood.

With a perfect smiling face, looking back at her, it was Edgar.

I didn't expect to see him so soon.

Lydia was relieved. But, Ulysses was close at hand. She couldn’t afford to lose her facade of being Banshee yet.

“Lord, it’s no use. Banshee knows that I’m the Blue Knight’s descendant.”

“No, I'm the Blue Knight Earl. Banshee, if you are the member of the Earl family, you should return with me, is that not so?”

“Let’s just see from the bet then.”

Edgar was not paying any attention to Ulysses. He went up to Lydia. Taking her hand, he continued:

“Do you remember Lady Gladys? Then, you should know who should be qualified to become Earl and inherited her soul.”

Edgar had flawless grace when he had taken a woman’s hand. Combined with his charismatic beauty and his eloquent voice, giving a gentle whisper, he would’ve had young ladies fawning all over him.

Even though Lydia knew this was Edgar’s technique, she couldn’t help but think

he was twisted in his mind. He must've thought that Banshee, because she was a girl, could not resist his charm.

What should I do? Things seem to have become stranger.

"That man simply does not have what it takes to be a proper nobleman. At heart, he is a dangerous being."

Was Edgar deliberately trying to provoke Ulysses?

Angered by Edgar's words, Ulysses then came up and took Lydia by the shoulders and pulled her close to him.

"You should just stop this pointless struggle."

At this point, at lightning speed, Edgar suddenly took a pistol from his coat pocket and pointed it close at Ulysses.

Then, he immediately aimed the gunpoint on Ulysses's brow.

Ulysses, who did not expect it, automatically froze in place, unable to move.

"Second Ulysses, do you not have a third body? As you are now a little older, it is still far too early for you to be born in another son's body as a spare."

".... Even if you kill me, you cannot escape from here."

"It doesn't matter, as long as you'll be well ahead of me in the other world."

Edgar was ready to make Ulysses unconsciously dead. Lydia noticed he wasn't hesitant to pull the trigger. She was finally aware how determined Edgar was.

But just before the gunfire sound, there was a black figure standing between them.

The black hellhound snapped onto Edgar's wrist, and the gunshot shot straight past Ulysses's shoulder.

While Jimmy was distracted with Ulysses laying on the ground, Lydia quickly took Edgar and fled from the room.

"Banshee, where are you going? I haven't given Ulysses the fatal blow...."

Even if Edgar did, he would have been killed on the spot.

Regardless, Lydia has yet thought of a way to escape from there.

It wasn't long before the other hellhounds caught up as they had noticed the commotion.

Ulysses was not the only one who knew how to deal with evil fairies like Jimmy. If it's enemies against fairies, fairy doctor Lydia also had knowledge on how to

deal with them.

“Edgar, get down!”

The two people both fell to the ground when the dogs caught up. This was the quickest method.

A swarm of demon dogs flew over them. Lydia quickly rose and looked for a place to hide. She then pulled Edgar into a nearby room.

It was pitch black. Lydia tried to move forward until Edgar grabbed her hand and pulled her back.

“You’re .... Lydia?”

Lydia didn’t say anything in reply. He took off her hood and touched her hair as if to confirm.

“I am really not mistaken. You have the faint scent of chamomile.”

It was only until she heard him whisper did she realize how close they were to each other. She couldn’t help but pull back in confusion. However, Edgar still held her hair, so they had little distance from each other.

“How did you come here... It's too dangerous. Did you come here by yourself?”

“No, Sir Paul also came. We found the amber, so we relied on it to come here.”

“You found the amber? Are you serious?”

“The amber was used as pigment in Lady Gladys’s portrait. I handed it to Sir Paul so that he could escape with Banshee.”

Edgar who appeared worried was silent for a long time. Finally, he let out a sigh and gently said:

“So, why did you pretend to be Banshee? You didn’t follow Paul and Banshee to leave. Therefore, you may not be able to go back, right?”

“That was because Jimmy happened to come by to pick up Banshee. I couldn’t let Banshee follow him, so I had to do it.”

“Lydia, Ulysses wouldn’t hurt Banshee, but if he knew you were here, there’s no telling what he would do to you. Why did you do something so dangerous?”

Edgar had a point, but it felt as if he was implying Lydia was a burden. She couldn’t help but get angry.

“What do you mean, I shouldn’t have come? You’ve taken an unnecessary risk too! You knew fully well Banshee’s prophecy and hid the truth from me. Did

you tell me Ulysses was intending to kill you? Do you want to die? How can you be so reckless!”

“... How did you know about the prophecy?”

“Kelpie told me... He said you were going to die anyway, that our marriage would fail. So, he tried to take me to the fairy world.”

“That horse is really...”

Edgar muttered. She was unsure whether he was upset for Kelpie’s blabbering mouth or because Kelpie was trying to take her away.

But, Lydia doubted that the main reason was the latter.

“Knowing that I wouldn’t worry since you were going to disappear in front of me, I should have obediently followed Kelpie into the land of fairies! This way you would be forgotten, and I could’ve lived a care-free life, not suffering anymore .....

Lydia suddenly blurted out. But she quickly recovered and shut her mouth. After a long period in the dark, her eyes adjusted to the light, and she was able to see Edgar’s shadow. She felt even more shy and couldn’t help but want to turn away from him. But instead, he took a hold of her hand.



“I’m sorry. So, you put the engagement ring on in order to come help me. That meant you chose me, not Kelpie.”

He touched the ring on her hand.

You are so full of yourself.

In order to hide her embarrassment, her tone unconsciously got harsher:

“I was only wearing this ring to stop Kelpie from getting near me! I was never worried about you, since you always do what you want!”

“Lydia, I thought I’d never see you again. Really, from the bottom of my heart,

I'm so delighted. I was afraid to have you involved in my death, so I decided to come alone."

Edgar's tone sounded serious, unlike the accusing Lydia who felt constrained. He was worried that it would trouble her. Instead, Lydia felt guilty for not being able to do anything.

Her knowledge as a fairy doctor couldn't compete with Ulysses. If she tried, it may have only made things worse.

"However, I think we shouldn't hand Banshee to Ulysses, and we must absolutely not let her recognize him as the Blue Knight Earl. Even if I'm not the earl, I must at least fulfill this responsibility."

Was this the reason as to why he attempted to gain her favor?

"Sweet talking her is useless."

"Because she can sense Ulysses inherited the blood? However, Banshee was a human girl before. No matter what, I am clearly better than Ulysses."

His vanity is really amazing...

"Oh, this is not an affair by the way. You should understand this is necessary, right?"

Is it necessary to anyone for you to always speak of love? I really don't understand what you're thinking.

"Banshee seems to like Sir Paul, so your sweet talk may sound false to her."

Lydia's accusation seemed to struck hard at Edgar. He was silent for the moment and then said:

"Hmm, so just like you?"

"I-I don't like Sir Paul."

"Paul is very simple and oblivious to a woman's heart. However, he is also very honest and passionate of his work. This kind of person is an ideal type in your heart. So, regardless if I even spoke two honest words from my lips, you just do not wish to believe me."

"It has nothing to do with Sir Paul. I just purely do not trust you! Now is not the time to argue about this kind of matter."

"Yes, it is so cold here. I feel as if the snow has blown onto my feet."

Lydia agreed. At their feet, there was starting to be piles of white snow. But, it

was too dark all around the room, so she couldn't see anything clearly.

"Is the window open? You see, there's a light ahead."

So, while holding hands, the two walked toward the light. Edgar told her that, because it was too dark to see, he and Lydia had to hold hands.

The further they went, the deeper the snow seemed to rise. When they finally reached the source of the light, it turned out to be a fireplace. However, the flame was about to go out inside. Leaving a dim, red light, it held little warmth for a long while.

"Lydia, what is going on here?"

After she heard his question, she looked around the fireplace and noticed a snow-covered forest.

There were no other buildings in the forest but a lonely fireplace.

"Have we come outside the building?"

"That's not possible. The entire building is made of magic, so it is not that simple. We should still be in the room. We must've gotten caught in some distortion in the space of this building."

Lost, the two began gathering and throwing branches into the flames, making the room a bit brighter. Their surroundings were clearer, but they still weren't able to see the entire room.

"We just came in a moment ago, so the door should be somewhere in here."

As Lydia began to look, Edgar let go of her hand.

He unsteadily slid down as he laid on the side of a tree trunk, feeling lightheaded.

Lydia hurried to his side and found blood trickling on his right hand, a bright-crimson (incarnadine) color staining the white snow on the ground.

"Edgar! Were you injured? Oh, you've lost a lot of blood ...."

Edgar gazed at the blood on his hands, as if he only just noticed his wound.

"But I don't feel any pain."

He rolled up his sleeves and saw his injuries. The hellhound left bite wounds, but it did not look obvious.

Even when Lydia bound the bite with a handkerchief, it still bled.

"The hellhound's teeth may still be left inside the wound...."

“Is it serious?”

Well, it’s not too good...

“We have to hurry back to the human world. Without the sunlight, it won’t stop bleeding. It is only nighttime here, so right now, the dark fairies are at their strongest.”

Then again, how do we escape from here? We must pass the forest to leave the room, but where was the door we came from?

As she looked around, she couldn’t find anything. Usually, a fireplace was built resting against a wall. As Lydia went towards it, she thought there should be walls near it at the other end. But, despite that, she didn’t feel any walls there.

“Lydia, do you have a knife? Mine was taken away before I entered the room.”

“Eh, what do you plan on doing?”

“Cut the wound open and take out the teeth of the Hellhound.”

“What, you’re doing it yourself?”

“I’m used to it.”

Lydia couldn’t believe it. Escaping the hands of Edgar’s Prince seemed like a life-long battle.

Bleeding from injuries were nothing more than a routine to him.

In spite of that, Lydia couldn’t hand the knife to him. She knew that the hellhound’s teeth must have already melted. After all, the magical effects could not be so easily removed from the human body.

Edgar noticed Lydia’s hesitant look and was able to guess the general reason. Tired, he let out a sigh.

“Is this Banshee’s prophecy? I’m not in pain or discomfort, but I don’t have any strength.”

Lydia shook her head. She didn’t want Edgar to die.

“It’s fine. As long as we can escape from here, you will be saved.”

“I cannot move.”

The scattered snowflakes began to fall harder and harder. Eventually, the wind began to blow around, turning the place into a great blizzard.

It was so cold that their hands and feet were gradually becoming paralysed.

“Go on ahead. If you remain here, you will only freeze to death.”

“

Don't speak nonsense.”

“Weren't you no longer worried for me?”

“I-I didn't mean it. Did you think I would actually leave you? You should know I cannot do that, why must you say such things! That is so sly.”

Lydia took Edgar's arm, trying to get him to stand up.

Instead, she ended up falling onto him, and he held her in his arms.

“I'm sorry. I just wanted to confirm I wasn't despised by you.”

Lydia, who was in his arms, couldn't help but recall what happened before, so her body stiffened. However, then and now were different. Edgar's arms that held her were effortless. She could push him away at any time possible.

“Are you still upset about before?”

“A-anyway, nothing happened between us. It doesn't matter.”

“I want to clear the misunderstanding between us. About the last time, when I called someone else's name in my sleep, please give me another chance to explain.”

If it was that-- Lydia felt a sharp, stabbing pain in her chest.

“No need, it has nothing to do with me.”

“What's the name? Was it my former family tutor or was it the younger sister of my cousin? I do not want to die without clearing your misunderstanding. This matter is very important to me.”

Lydia couldn't answer. She only remained silent.

“Ann, Anne, Angie<sup>[3]</sup>

... had I known I was going to get a chance to explain, I would have listened to Raven listing them in alphabetical order.”

“There were that many!? You are really...”

“In my heart, I am also full of regrets.

”

“Do not say these kinds of ominous words. As long as the sun comes, the hellhound's magic will disappear.”

He didn't know whether or not Lydia would listen, so he went ahead and said:

“Can we kiss .....?”

Suddenly, Lydia went rigid, and she began to struggle, trying to get up and leave Edgar's hold.

"Just... Just don't..."

Edgar gave a lonely smile.

"Even if I was drunk and forgot all my manners, I still did not even receive a kiss. Do you not think I'm insane?"

It's no use trying to complain to me.

"However, it's certainly because I like how you have always become unsettled."

Edgar's ash-mauve eyes gleamed under the flames of the fireplace. Lydia, who saw his eyes, suddenly wanted to burst out and cry.

She instantly remembered, she was not the one Edgar was earnestly longing for.

He thought he was holding Ermine, and so he wasn't able to let go.

"Ah~ I don't wish to die with regrets. Please, at the least, promise to give me a kiss."

Please, do not speak of dying.

Lydia was very troubled. She didn't know whether she felt shy, angry, or sad.

Although it was too complicated, there was one thing she was positive of before coming here.

I do not want to lose Edgar.

Back in Scotland, Lydia could have lived a comfortable life without him.

Or perhaps she was lucky. She was able to gain this job of being a true fairy doctor because of Edgar, who was willing to work with Lydia even though she was not accepted by others. Then again, without this job, she could go on to live in the fairy world instead. That may also be a blessing.

However, if she ignored the fairy doctor side of her, her heart became overwhelmed with loss as she thought of Edgar not being around.

Lydia didn't know if Edgar could give her happiness. She knew her feelings were never calm. She was sometimes angry, sometimes tense, sometimes sad to the point of crying.

Even so, Lydia couldn't imagine being apart from him. Even if she lived in Scotland and returned to her normal life, she may not be able to feel true

happiness anymore.

Why is that? I cannot even trust him.

Lydia finally responded:

“When we return safely, we can talk about it.”

Troubled, Edgar said: “All right.”

“It seems I just cannot be happy to let you die with a kiss. I want to at least let you return home safely.”

Leaning against the tree trunk, Edgar unsteadily tried to stand up.

He’s obviously standing up, was I just being tricked?

The thought flashed in her mind for a moment. But as she watched Edgar struggle to move forward, as the blood from his hand continued to bleed, she immediately understood he was really forcing himself.

“You were looking for a way out a moment ago.”

The snow was getting worse, and it became increasingly harder to see in any direction or the surroundings.

“Lydia, there’s someone in front of you.”

Among the blur of the flying snowflakes, there was a shadowy figure gradually coming closer.

“Ermine.....”

After watching intently, Lydia found that it was the short-haired woman she knew. But to be here in Ulysses place, Lydia didn’t know how to react once they met, so she froze in place.

“Lord Edgar, Miss Lydia, are you alright?”

“Not quite.”

“Are you injured?”

Ermine nervously ran up to Edgar and saw his hand was bleeding. She felt the magic of the hellhound emitting from the wound and immediately made a serious frown.

As usual, she still cared for Edgar from the bottom of her heart.

“Ermine, did you come alone? Fortunately, I have not been found, but is everything alright?”

Edgar was wary of Ermine’s presence, but his caring tone continued to be

tender.

"I came alone with Raven and Sir Nico. We separated in order to find the whereabouts of you and Miss Lydia."

It was hard to determine whether Ermine was lying or telling the truth.

"In short, we need to get out of here," said Ermine who looked at the heavy blizzard.

"Do you know where we can leave?"

"This way."

Lydia immediately followed behind Ermine.

Ulysses and her may have become accomplices, but whether or not she was following Ulysses, it was certain Ermine couldn't hurt Edgar.

"Ermine, Edgar needs sunlight. We must return to the human world as soon as possible....."

"All right, then. Let's speed up the pace."

Edgar also followed, but, as he did, he quietly handed Lydia something. It was the pistol he took from Ulysses.

"When the time comes, you do not need to take care of me anymore."

This was the first time Edgar's voice gave her a firm command. At this point, she realized Edgar who was leaving to walk was already at his limit, he was cornered, no where to go.

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## Notes

1. Interesting note: Ulysses' name is actually Latin for the name of the Greek hero Odysseus from the epic poem, The Odyssey, by Homer.
2. AKA Daoine Sidhe or aos sí. I believe this is the accurate term/name. I can't really find anything else that could match this story line.
3. Note from original raws: All these names start in letter "A". (**Vicky**: Not sure if this implied these names were inaccurate or not. Names are always troublesome in translations after all.)

## Chapter 7 - In exchange with your life

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“This is... Lady Gladys!”

Without blinking, Banshee stared in awe as Paul steadily showed her the portrait.

“I’ve been taking care of this painting for a while. This may have been the reason why you’ve felt drawn to me or even paid any special attention towards me.”

Banshee lightly caressed the woman’s golden hair with her fingers, as if aware of the amber within it.

“These are my tears I have shed, the amber that prophesied Lady Gladys’s death.”

“It’s not your fault. I think, because of the amber, she wanted to pass on her will after her death. She was wishing for someone to succeed her family name.”

In order to bring Banshee away from Ulysses’s side, Paul continued his attempt to convince her.

He didn’t know how long Lydia could last, disguising as Banshee, before she was discovered by Ulysses.

Especially with the whole place being created by fairy magic, Paul needed to quickly persuade Banshee’s mind. She needed to return outside, so he was desperate in order to help save Lydia and Edgar.

“Banshee, if the amber can unlock your memories, then can you use your own power to unlock it?”

“.....Only Ulysses great talent can do that.”

In truth, Paul was well aware. It was useless to try to lie that Edgar could also break the seal. Without a choice, he shut his mouth in silence.

Banshee knew better than anyone who inherited the power of the Earl.

If Ulysses unlocked the seal on Banshee, she would admit he was Gladys’s heir and would immediately hand the Ashenbert legacy to him.

“I suppose, you still don’t wish to return to Earl Ashenbert’s with me, do you?”

Troubled, Paul hung his head down. She looked at him apologetically.

“Sir Paul, your earl is certainly an outstanding gentleman, but he is still not my master after all.....”

At that moment, the room’s door suddenly opened.

Frightened, Paul looked up and saw an angered juvenile standing in front of him.

It was Ulysses.

“I’ve let the dogs follow the scent of Banshee. It turns out she never even left this room. So, just who was the woman wearing the green cloak?”

Ulysses walked into the room, trailed by the hellhounds. He looked down and stared at Paul.

“You could not have entered here on your own. That could only mean the other woman was the fairy doctor.”

He let out a small smile.

“I don’t think she has the ability to enter here either. Unless, one of you have Banshee’s ambers?”

Paul nervously bowed his head and ended up confessing.

Within a second, Paul’s clothes were tightly seized at the chest, and he was beaten down to the ground.

Banshee involuntarily let out a scream. Before Paul could even look up, he was being kicked about.

The pain made him unable to breath, unable to stand up. After attacking Paul, one of the hellhounds transformed into a largely built man. He then, with one hand, grabbed Paul by the collar and pulled him up.

“Where is the amber? And don’t say you would rather die, because this guy can show you what it is like to be merciless.”

“.... Ulysses, please stop .....”

Jimmy pulled away from his close distance to Ulysses and threw a punch at Paul.

Paul finally collapsed, unable to rise. And then, another tall hellhound went to loot through Paul’s clothes for any amber. But he returned to his master with no findings.

“Perhaps the amber is with the fairy doctor instead.”

As Ulysses spoke, he watched as Jimmy restrained Banshee.

“Did this man hand you the amber?”

Banshee did not know how to answer. Jimmy followed her gaze that landed underneath the bed, where she hastily hid the portrait of Lady Gladys. He immediately dug underneath the bed.

Not long after, he found the portrait and gave it to Ulysses.

“What is this?”

“It is ..... Sir Paul gave me the portrait. He probably thought I would like it, so he showed it to me. Please return it.”

Banshee’s voice trembled as she made the request to Ulysses.

Even though she believed Ulysses to be her master, why did she not speak the truth?

Paul momentarily thought of this discrepancy, but mainly he hoped Ulysses would ignore the portrait and return it to Banshee.

Ulysses didn’t see past the amber in the picture. He just thought it was an ordinary painting. However, instead of returning it to her, he threw it into the fireplace.

“The amber must indeed be in the hands of the fairy doctor then....”

“..... Probably not. Ulysses, this painting is not burning. ”

After hearing Jimmy’s words, Ulysses turned to look in surprise. Paul thought, this is bad. Banshee was scared stiff in place.

Ulysses walked to the fireplace, watching the portrait. The blonde female’s hair shone as it reflected against the flames.

He smiled.

“So, this is the original amber that will remove the seal!”

Ulysses continued to smile, subtly hinting Jimmy to grab the portrait from the fire. And then, immediately he gave a sinister expression as he walked toward Banshee.

“You clearly knew this man was trying to fool me, and yet you wish to defy me?”

“No, no, how I dare not....”

“Only I can unlock the seal, so don’t you dare. Come with me, I want you to give me Gladys’s legacy.”

Banshee was then forcefully dragged by the hellhound and couldn’t stop looking back at Paul.

“Sir Paul .....!”

“As long as you behave, I will spare his life.”

Ermine, Lydia and Edgar finally left the blowing snowstorm of the forest. The three people walked discretely into the corridor, each step causing the floors to creak. At last, they returned to the room where Banshee was originally trapped in.

Ermine entered into the room first but returned with no one from inside.

“Did Sir Paul taken Banshee to leave already?”

Lydia thought, hopefully that was so. However, Edgar was doubtful.

Although he was painfully leaning against the wall, he forced himself to continue to walk with his remaining strength. As to avoid the blood from dripping on the floor, he caught the curtains that were hanging in the corridors. He watched as the blood stained the curtains, the stain growing progressively bigger.....

Surprisingly, his tone of voice still remained clear.

“It’s impossible for Paul to coax the girl in such a short period of time anyway.”

This is not a pursuit of love.

However, Lydia was also puzzled as to what happened. Edgar seemed to be taking everything into account as he entered inside the bedroom.

“Paul!”

Once Edgar loudly yelled out his name, Lydia also saw Paul laying face down in a dark corner.

“.....Lord Edgar ... ..? Miss Lydia as well? Ah-- thank goodness.”

“What happened? And Banshee?”

When Paul saw Ermine, he was clearly startled and jumped up.

“Sir Ferman, are you all right?”

“Well, yes. I’m fine, I just came across an incident, so my mind right now is not

very stable.....”

Paul took deep breaths, diligently trying to calm himself down. He finally turned around to face Edgar, kneeling down to apologize.

“Lord Edgar, I am truly very sorry. Ulysses unlocked Banshee’s seal, and the amber was taken away from me.”

“I’ll take it back then.”

Edgar, without thinking, answered.

As each second started to count, they didn’t have time to do that sort of thing. Lydia needed to hurry and find Nico to help Edgar escape. But, it seemed Edgar didn’t care for his physical condition.

“Lydia, you stay here with Paul.”

“I don't want to. I also want to go together.”

But Edgar gave Ermine a look. Then, they quickly left the bedroom and closed the door.

“Wait, Edgar! Open the door!”

“I’m sorry, Lydia. I’ll certainly find Nico and ask him to lead you out of here.”

“I don’t want that! This building is magically built by Ulysses. You will definitely be lost without me.”

“Lord Edgar, I want to go, too. Please open the door!”

Lydia and Paul were violently knocking on the door together. Though she was constantly crying out to him, the door remained locked from the outside. Moreover, Edgar did not respond again.

What should I do? Edgar intends to sacrifice himself.

Lydia began to look around the room, trying to see if there was another way out. However, there were only windows in the room.

But, the windows couldn’t be opened. Because it was protected by magic, no matter how the glass was struck, it would not break.

Paul attempted to peek through the door lock, to see if whether it was possible to unlock it.

With all of that, the two moons still hung high in the sky. Lydia gazed at the scenery outside the window.

She kept thinking about how when she first entered the building, she was so

concerned of this strange sky.

Here, the magic seemed to be fixed on the outside scenery, which was very similar to the Merrows' use of magic.

But no matter how strong the magic is, it cannot change the nature of the scene. So, there really can't be more than one moon.

So, why are there two of them?

The right moon looked as if it moved higher than when they first came. The other moon stayed in the same place.

Why...?

"Miss Lydia, do you have a pistol?"

As Lydia heard Paul's voice, it brought her back into the room and she remembered she was gripping tightly onto the pistol.

"Ah, well, that's right. You can use it to break the door lock."

"However, the sound of the gunfire may attract the attention of the hellhounds and Ulysses....."

Lydia and Paul began to think again and, before getting lost in thought, there was a voice from outside.

"Lydia, are you inside?"

Nico's voice! Lydia hurried close to the door.

"Nico? Quickly help open the door for me! This is no good. Edgar has gotten injured, but he went with Ermine to see Ulysses."

The door was immediately unlocked, and it opened. Outside, Lydia saw Raven and a masked Nico standing.

"Did Lord Edgar get injured?"

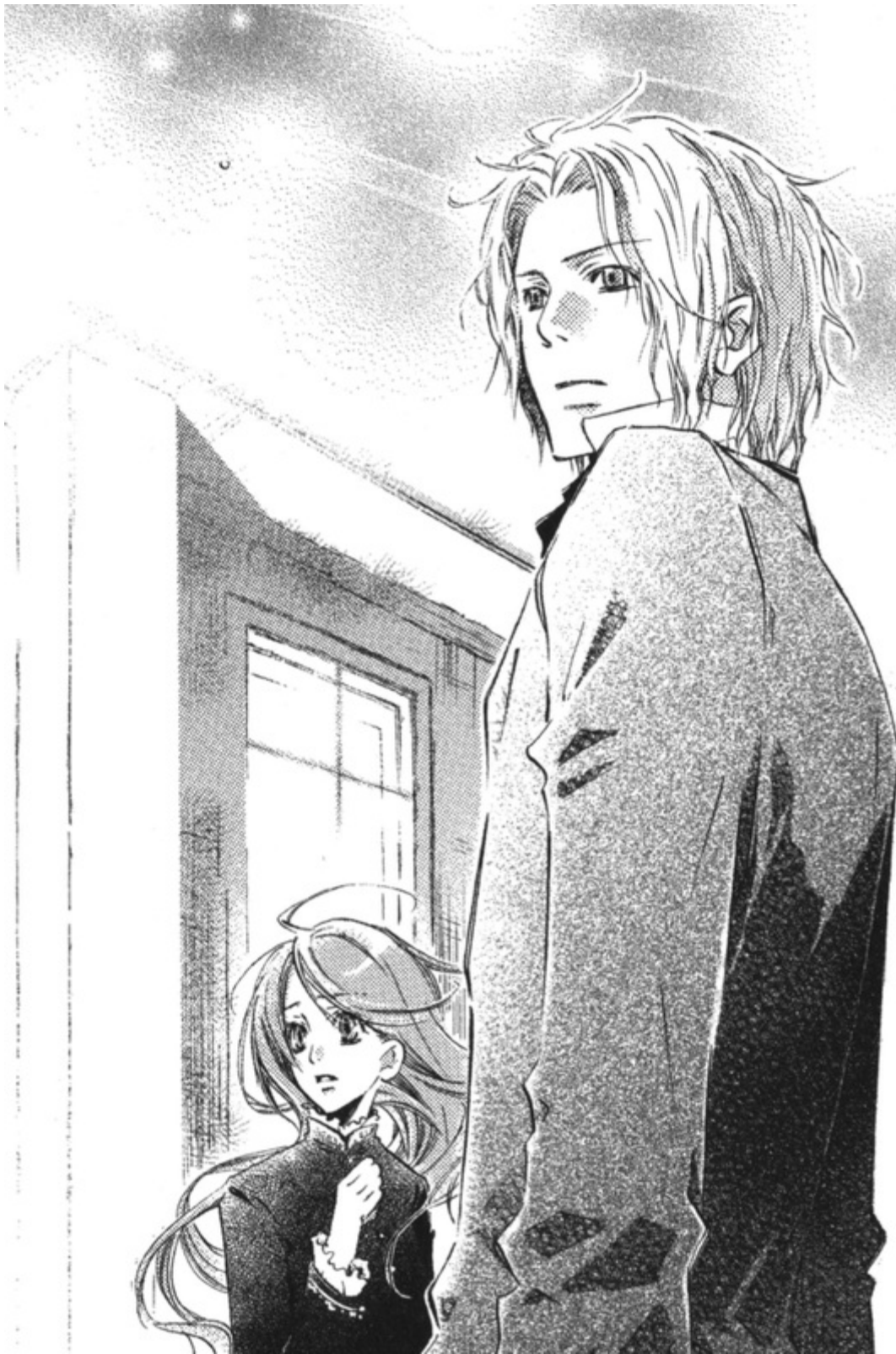
Raven immediately revealed a murderous expression.

"Well, Ulysses broke Banshee's seal, and so the amber was robbed. Edgar intended to risk his life to stop Ulysses from getting Gladys's legacy."

"Then, let us go."

Though Paul rarely ordered, he and Lydia left the room together. But Nico only shrugged helplessly and said:

"I told her to stop getting involved with the earl again, and she still never listens."



Edgar intended to go alone with Ermine to ambush Ulysses.

Ironically, instead of Edgar seeking him, it might as well been said that Ulysses came out to invite Edgar who came for a visit , because not long after, the hellhounds came out from the hallways and found Edgar and Ermine. Seizing them, the hellhounds leisurely brought them in front of Ulysses.

“I was too careless. I had unexpectedly forgotten your expertise was in deception.”

Ulysses stood tall in the middle of the broad hallway, no longer than a step

closer to Edgar, placing both his hands on his chest as if he was upset.

“Do you wish to continue our bet from earlier?”

Banshee sat in a large chair next to Ulysses with her head down, on the verge of tears. As Edgar saw this, he sympathetically said to her:

“You don’t need to worry about Paul. My friends will save him.”

“Even if someone came to support you right now, it’s impossible for you to win against me.”

Ulysses then gave side-long glance at Ermine.

By his look alone, Edgar was unsure whether Ermine and Ulysses were speaking with each other in secret.

“Lord, I should advise you to quickly beg for mercy, Then perhaps, I may let you go.”

“Do you mean to say that, as long as I give my body for Prince to use, I will be saved?”

“

You may think about it however you like. I just want you to see me receive Gladys’ legacy right this very moment.”

Ulysses stood up.

Edgar, with shaky footsteps, stood up straight as well. Provokingly, he spoke:

“No matter what you gain, you do not have what it takes to be a noble. You're not qualified to call yourself the Earl's last descendant. You, who does not even understand the history or significance of this English title, not even the noble obligations, nor the spirit of chivalry; and yet you still intend to fight against me?”

“You also only have your scathing words. Do not forget your poor life and future are in my hands now.”

Although Ulysses arrogantly spoke in a tone full of pride, his heart must’ve felt differently for he clenched his fists and was trembling.

In England, it wasn’t easy to be a noble. Even Ulysses, who was dressed ostentatiously, spoke words that were those of a commoner. As long as he had that mouth of his, he would always be discerned of that truth.

Edgar, at an advantage, continued to say:

“Prince is also the same. Is that fabricated virtue of his also regarded as royalty? He's a rogue in a masquerade of beauty. He is excessively underrating the historic nature of the English royals.”

In reality, Prince was also said to be part of the English upper-class, but that was not all important. Edgar was only deliberately trying to enrage Ulysses.

However, though he was provoked before, Ulysses did not fall for it this time.

“The useless talk ends here. Unlock the seal.”

As he spoke, Ulysses placed the portrait on a small table, touching the blond hair with his fingers. Edgar couldn't help but feel surprised. So this was the original amber.

It was hidden so well.

In a low voice, Ermine whispered to Edgar whether she should snatch the portrait back. He did not know whether it truly came from her heart, but the chances were obviously not high.

Edgar shook his head to slightly decline.

“The only ability needed is to make it impossible for Banshee's amber to burn and melt. That, Lord, was what you lacked.”

Ulysses took a knife and lightly grazed his fingertips. With the blood that seeped out, he smudged it onto Lady Glady's silky, golden hair. This was supposed to be a remarkable moment. However, Ulysses lacked the grace and beauty, so Edgar couldn't help but frown in disapproval.

Whether or not it was beautiful, the blood-stained hair began to emit flames.

The amber burned, and the flames spread across the portrait.

Banshee stood directly at the flame and stared at the portrait. Not before long, she staggered and fainted on the ground.

Edgar automatically tried to go to her side and lift her, but Jimmy blocked him by grabbing onto his wrist.

Jimmy deliberately used his nail to cut across Edgar's bite wound.

“Do not touch me, you degenerate canine.”

After hearing Edgar's words, Jimmy became furious and flashed into his original shape of a hellhound.

Ermine immediately blocked the front of Edgar, but Jimmy jumped back in time

to avoid her knife.

Edgar took this chance to approach closer to Banshee, but he ended up surrounded by other hellhounds.

One came flying at him, so Edgar grabbed a candle to repel against it. But then the other hellhounds came from behind and began to strike again.

Edgar's body just couldn't keep up to stop it.

At this point, he was swooped in from behind by one of the dogs and was knocked down to the ground.

Through his dim sight, he saw a boy with brown skin standing in front of him.  
"My Lord, I'm sorry that I've come late."

Then, Raven took out a knife, as if to intimidate the hellhounds.

It's difficult for humans to kill magical hellhounds. Moreover, Raven and the hellhounds had created an entirely new battleground just a moment ago.

The hellhounds seemed to realize the spirit that lurked in Raven's body. Therefore, they growled in place instead of moving.

"Ah!"

At that moment, a cry came out of Banshee.

Ermine grasped Banshee with a knife against her throat.

This, Edgar and Ulysses did not expect would happen at all.

"Ermine, what are you doing..."

"Lord Edgar, as long as Banshee dies, Lady Gladys' legacy cannot be given to anyone anymore. I now have fairy magic in me, so, I can kill this young girl."

"Stop!"

Ulysses could not help but become tense.

"Raven, quickly take Edgar away. His injuries are in dire need of help that his life depends on it."

After listening, Raven was startled to see Edgar's wrist. However, he was unable to move one bit for he was still surrounded by the hellhounds.

"Please make way, or I shall kill this girl."

Ulysses, through his doubts and worries, could not even guess Ermine's intentions.

Edgar didn't understand the reason for her actions either, but from this

situation she created, he knew he could be saved. But after further thought, the problem still wasn't resolved.

He took a deep breath before he ordered Ermine:

"Ermine, let go of her. I do not intend to sacrifice her in order to escape."

Banshee was a member of the Earl family after all. Even though he did not have the powers of the true Earl, he inherited the Merrow's sword. Therefore, he intended to also bear all responsibility.

It was Lydia who had woken up the noble side in him. At the same time, she helped him claim the Blue Knight Earl's title, which he was also quite proud of.

He could not sacrifice the family members.

Ermine looked puzzled at him but still obeyed the order.

Ulysses gave out a triumphant laughter that echoed in the halls.

Following his footsteps, Lydia and Paul arrived a bit late compared to Raven. They ran to the high stairwell of the balcony above. From there, they were able to see Edgar who was surrounded by the hellhounds, along with Ulysses giving out a loud laughter.

"Lord, you just sacrificed your partner in the fight so far. Such naive judgements."

"At the time, a companion and this young girl were different. Moreover, my position at that time was different."

"Are you speaking from the pride of a noble? If this becomes detrimental weakness, I'd rather not have it for myself."

A tense atmosphere permeated in the hall.

Lydia, who was hidden on the sidelines watching the scene, was trying to come up with a way to lift the crisis before her.

"Has Banshee's seal been unlocked yet?"

Paul muttered to himself.

"It should have. It seems there are ambers on the edge of the canvas at the table. This meant that the amber itself was burned."

After hearing Nico's words, Paul couldn't help but frown.

"Ah~~ such outstanding work is grey now..."

Paul seemed to have treasured the art's value of the portrait so much more

than the Banshee's amber.

"Banshee, come here."

Ulysses shouted. She staggered up to him.

"In the end, all of your memories should be restored. Do you not have anything to give to the Blue Knight Earl's descendant?"

Lady Gladys' legacy must not get handed to Ulysses, but how can it be prevented?

Lydia swallowed her throat. She could only quietly wait and see what would happen.

Banshee stopped her footsteps in front of Ulysses. She did a little bow as if for a nobleman and continued on to say:

"Ulysses, please save this gentleman's life."

Ulysses, who didn't think she would make such a request, immediately scowled.

"Please send him to a place of sunlight, and afterwards I will immediately give you Lady Gladys' legacy."

"Are you trying to give me conditions to comply with? You are saying such a thing to your master?"

"No, I was only....."

Tears fell on her face, and her body was trembling. She was probably very fearful of the hellhounds and Ulysses. Then, she first stole a glance at Edgar, gaining ground, she resolutely looked at Ulysses and said:

"I do not think you are my master."

Not only Lydia, but everyone was astonished. The room was surrounded by silence for an instant.

At that moment, cold rage rose up in Ulysses.

"Then, I'll immediately kill that man. You have no choice in the matter."

With his hand, Ulysses excitedly commanded Jimmy to begin.

The hellhound restored to being a young boy before swooping past Raven with a brandished knife attack.

Then, the other dogs came bouncing up behind. The scene abruptly became chaotic in the room.

“Stop!”

Lydia couldn't help but loudly shout, as she walked out of their hiding spot.

“Lydia? Stay back!”

Edgar, in order to block her, loudly shouted. Lydia stepped down the stairwell to find a hellhound lunging at her with menacing claws.

Without a choice, she immediately stooped down and was reluctantly ready to take the blow. When she finally looked up, she saw that jet-black hellhound jumped, and it was preparing to attack Edgar.

“Edgar! Watch your back!”

Edgar also noticed the hellhound behind him, but he could only sit wearily against the wall. He probably couldn't even see the scene properly.

At this point, a silhouette came in front of the hellhounds.

Suddenly rushing in front him was Banshee. She was immediately bitten by one of the hellhounds and fell to the ground from the attack.

How could this be... ?

Lydia spoke to herself, but she had no more time to think of making a firm decision.

We must move everyone out of here.

Although she didn't know whether she could accomplish it, or whether her guess was correct. However, there was no other choice.

This was the perseverance of a fairy doctor.

She grasped tightly the pistol Edgar had given her, and as she lifted it up high, she cried out loudly:

“Hellhounds, listen clearly. Return to your lair now. Return to your graveyard! Otherwise, I'll call back the sun to this place!”

All the hellhounds' eyes were turned toward Lydia. They growled lowly in confusion.

“Before the sunlight blinds your eyes, quickly return to your lair!”

“Oh, I would like to see what the so-called fairy doctor can do.”

Ulysses gave an arrogantly mocking laughter. But unyielding, Lydia continued shouting:

“You used magic to link the night and the entire building together. But no

matter how clever your magic is, it cannot conceal that link, revealed by the moons. The left moon never moved as if glued to the window. If that is the link that represents the source of magic, then once I destroy it, the sun shall return to this building.”

The hellhounds roared in turmoil, almost in fear. It appeared Lydia guessed correctly, but that was not her only challenge.

“I see you could figure it out. I’d really like to applaud you. But whether you miss the shot or not, as long as you try to shoot, the hellhounds will tear your throat on the spot.”

Lydia never used a pistol before. The moon was hanging in the distant window, and, once she shot, there was no possible way to escape.

“Lydia, it’s no problem. You can certainly shoot it.....”

Edgar sat against the wall, smiling as he watched Lydia. He seemed as if he was about to lose consciousness.

Lydia suppressed her wrist from shaking, trying to aim at the target.

Oh God...

“This is it ..... Shoot it well.”

At Edgar’s urging, Lydia prayed in her heart and then immediately pulled the heavy trigger.

The next moment, the moon along with the window shattered into pieces.

“I-it hit, I hit it?”

In reality, the bullet did not hit the targeted window and was embedded in the walls instead. However, Raven swung his knife together at the same time of the shot, which shattered the glass into falling pieces. This, Lydia had no idea of and merely found the shot to be really miraculous.

The dazzling sunlight from the broken window shot into the room.

Meanwhile, the night view from outside the hall, began to melt and disappear, while the sunny sky rose up.

The magic coating the buildings vanished. The original surroundings of the place returned to normal as it was in the human world.

Because of this, many hellhounds fled and disappeared. At the same time, Jimmy who also transformed into a human immediately opened the door in the

corner of the room.

“Ulysses, hurry up!”

At this rate, it seemed that even the darkness was reluctant to connect with the evil spirits of the night.

Ulysses stood at the door, staring indignantly at Lydia. Then, he turned to Edgar, saying:

“Lord, count yourself lucky, but that is as far as your luck can go. His Royal Highness, who’s in America, will come visit England very soon. I believe your methods are very clear to the Royal Highness. Perhaps you’ll feel better being killed by me by that time.”

With that threat, Ulysses left those words and then disappeared into the door on the other side.

At once, Raven went over and opened the door. But on the other end was merely an empty, ordinary room.

“Edgar!”

Lydia threw down the pistol in her hand and rushed to Edgar’s side.

“You were saved, it's all fine!”

Edgar raised his wrist that was bitten by the hellhound and looked at the wound in awe. The blood was gone. Even the cloth dyed in blood was clean.

“The wounds and blood all vanished...”

“This means you weren’t truly injured. It was all just the dark fairy magic since the sun dispelled it.”

Helplessly confused, Edgar slightly cocked his head to the side.

“But Banshee’s prophecy did not disappear.”

“You’ll be fine, I’ve blocked it for you, the prophecy.”

Banshee was supported by Paul’s arm as she explained.

“Sir Paul, I believe in your earl. Please take me to his side.”

Paul nodded and, picked her up, brought her to Edgar.

She knelt beside him and gave him a smile.

“Thank you for saving my life, Banshee. From the hellhound’s bite, did you feel pain? It should have been restored immediately by the sun.”

“I’m a fairy, so we’re unable to resist the magic of other fairies. For humans, the

sunlight can dispel magic, but it has no effect on us.”

“How could that be.”

Paul whispered sadly in a low voice. Edgar, who was surprised, turned his eyes in a look of hope towards Lydia. However, she could only shake her head to the side.

“It doesn’t matter. I am also a member of the Earl family. My death prophecy has been achieved, and the other family members have not died.”

“But why did you sacrifice to this extent... Why did you resist Ulysses who helped unlock your seal?”

Banshee’s figure began thinning. Although she wasn’t bleeding, Lydia felt her life span was getting weaker.

“Because I finally remembered my purpose.”

Banshee began to quickly explain.

“We hoped to predict the death of a family member, but there was also a chance for me to become a sacrifice in order to save the lives of our family... I really wanted to save Lady Gladys, for she was the last blood descendant of Earl Ashenbert. She would have wanted to live and hoped for future generations. But because of Prince of Calamity, she had to give up her own life and the rest was left up to me.”

As Edgar listened, he nodded. He looked into Banshee’s eyes, as if listening intently as to not miss even a single word she said.

Perhaps Banshee’s words, for Edgar, were Lady Gladys’s personal instructions to him. Although he was fond of playing the role of a noble, he did occasional reveal times when he appeared as a true leader.

In Lydia’s eyes, Edgar was exuding a dazzling light.

“After Lady Gladys died, her soldier’s strength drained with her. The history and strength of the earl was forced to become lost forever. But even so, my master risked that in order to avoid having the legacy placed in the wrong hands. That was why she chose to have this relic passed on to future generations. Master wholeheartedly expected someone from England, and perhaps even other of the Earl’s descendants, to exist. Someone who could retrieve the Merrows’ sword and inherit the title of Earl. Therefore, I was handed the last mission, a

heavy responsibility, to decide the next Earl of Ashenbert. England was a promised land where humans and fairies could coexist. The Blue Knight Earl would've been the kingdom's fairy doctor .....

The original Blue Knight Earl was a fairy doctor but not any ordinary fairy doctor.

"Whenever the country was shaken by the involvement of fairies, in order to lift away the chaos, it was the responsibility of the Blue Knight Earl to bring peace among everyone. In order to show gratitude to the Earl's contributions, regardless of his disappearance 100 years ago or his heir being unknown, the country will always permanently award the title Blue Knight Earl to the one who deserves it."

".....Prince of Calamity, is he related to the disruptions among the fairies?"

"Yes."

"However, who is Prince?"

"As far as I know, he is the shredded blood and resentment of the opposing English families during the Highland War. And then, from the dark magic, he was born....."

The Highland War occurred 100 years ago. It was all due to the descendants of James II who were exiled.

In order to reclaim the throne, they instigated the Highland War to set off support for James II. This brought about the countless deaths of soldiers. A tragic, ruthless war that ended with numerous being killed.

Before, Lydia have heard a little of the story. It seemed that there was a prince who claimed to be the heir of an exiled king.

"When England won the victory over the Scottish Highlands, the country was able to restore its peace. However, the battle was not over for Lady Gladys. She and the others had to continue fighting and receiving further damage from Prince, whose presence wasn't even known by the King of England. One time, Lady Gladys told me, if someone who was able to unlock my memories appeared, I should decide whether they were qualified as the Blue Knight Earl."

Banshee looked up at Edgar again, as if to confirm again that her judgement was correct.

"I have always believed that blood was more important than anything else. But, it seems to not be the case. I believe Lady Gladys is pleased of the decision I made."

Banshee respectfully took Edgar's hand to her forehead.

"My master, I am here to give you the Ashenbert key, where you and future generations will oversee the fairy realm. For the kind fairies on the island, and those of the neighbouring English country, please be sure to use the power of Ashenbert to sever the blood of the evil Prince of Calamity."

Banshee's forehead suddenly began to glow, but her presence became more transparent, as if they could see through her body.

The translucent Banshee turned towards Lydia and gazed at the moonstone ring on her finger.

"This is the Moonstone of the Earl... Ah... I did not even notice the ring. That is very disgraceful of me. Fairy doctor, please forgive my rudeness. You are the Earl's wife."

"What? Ah, well..... "

"May the guardians of the fairies lend their powers to the two of you always."

Banshee never minded Lydia's hesitation. Because she was running out of time, so she slowly got up.

And then finally, she turned to wave and smiled shyly.

"Sir Paul, thank you for taking care of me. Since I've met you, I was able to properly find the heir for the Earl Ashenbert family. I may finally go to Lady Gladys' side now, going to the place of return for the human soul, receiving the call of God. For me, that matter is worth celebrating... "

Banshee then dissolved into the air and disappeared, though her voice lingered from the echoes in the hallways. Paul continued to look towards the window unmoving, not fully understanding as to what happened. It was as if he was still watching Banshee leave.

Everyone fell into silence, no one opened their lips to speak.

The dusty, empty room was bathed in white light, and the halls of the building were quiet. It was as if time stood perfectly still at that moment.

Finally, Edgar wearily rose up and broke the silence:

“..... Ashenbert key? I cannot see or feel anything.”

He mumbled irritably, as he opened the hand Banshee touched.

“Lydia, do you see it?”

“I also cannot see it. Probably, only those who inherit the key can feel it.”

Then it was something that was already belonged to only the Blue Knight Earl, for certain. Therefore, no one else, not even Ulysses, could take it away.

“I already cannot see the fairies nor the key. And to not know how to use the key, the key she delivered to me, I have already failed to live up to her expectations.”

Even though he said so, he tightly closed his hand, resolutely cherishing it even though he couldn't see what was inside his clutch.

Edgar sat in the carriage for London. He squinted at the soft, gentle clouds as the bright sunlight shone through them from time to time. He turned his gaze back at the scenery through the window and fell into deep thought.

The building Ulysses used was several miles away from London, so Edgar had to take his carriage to return back.

Edgar mentioned that he wanted to have a word with Lydia alone. However, after boarding the carriage, he had been silent for a while. Lydia sat next to him, fully alert.

Anyway, to avoid the recent intimate event from happening again, if Edgar was to open his advances, she must insistently refuse him for good.

Though she reminded herself to be careful, while she sat next to him in the rocking carriage, she noticed that he was solemnly thinking something serious. He was so stern that she couldn't help but worry.

Banshee's "key" that Edgar was entrusted with, the key he also did not know how to use, represented the unfinished mission of the last Earl's descendant. This was something Edgar had to continue and shoulder himself with.

Edgar probably did not even know how to view this heavy responsibility.

“..... Bridget?”

Opening his mouth, Edgar said suddenly.

“What? What did you say?”

“This was the name of the dog I raised before.”

“....I see.”

“It’s not this name? Lydia, please. At least telling me the first letter of the name is good enough.”

“You, you were really thinking with such a serious expression on this matter!?”

“

This is a very important matter.”

Had Banshee known Edgar’s true colours, her idealistic expectations would have been crushed.

Lydia unconsciously let out a heavy sigh.

“Lydia, if you don’t forgive me, I won’t be able to continue moving forward.”

“You're exaggerating too much.”

Lydia was on full alert. Her hands were firmly on her knees. But Edgar, without hesitation, folded his hands into hers.

As always, with a confident smile, he gazed at Lydia with a forward attitude. But somehow, at the moment, his tone seemed more serious than ever before.

“Since long ago till now, my purpose was to take revenge on Prince, to constantly challenge him. But now thinking carefully on it, maybe my heart never wanted to win against him. I just wanted him to regret striking a vicious blow against me, my parents, as well as Duke of Sylvainford. Therefore, I never cared whether or not I died.”

Lydia agreed with Edgar’s words. Especially now, because of Banshee’s predictions, it was intended to bring an end to Ulysses and bury him. Even if it meant Edgar and his people had to bury their lives without having attachments as well.

“However, when I was injured for ridiculous reasons and truly faced death’s door, you were by my side. And then, from that point, I suddenly didn’t wish to die. Had I died, then you would have been taken away by another man. Obviously whispering words of love in your ear, holding your hands like this, or even to mutually gaze into your eyes right now, these are my exclusive rights.”

Those are not your exclusive rights!

“Moreover, I have yet to completely have all of you. So, I cannot tolerate it if there may be another man, when I don’t even know how you are when you are

mine.”

You're getting more and more ridiculous.

“I really wanted to continue to live at that time. Before you return home safely, before you fall in love with me... Before I let you obtain happiness, I must continue to live under that good life. When the desires of my heart pour out in me, my mood also immediately changes. I not only want to continue to live, but with my own hands, I want to achieve all of your heart’s desires.”

After hearing all of this, Lydia couldn’t help but want to run away on the spot. But even when she moved further toward the corner of her seat, Edgar moved closer to her without a care.

“Lydia, can we start over again? I don't wish to break up with you.”

We were never together, so what do you mean start over again? Break up?

“I know one thing. I was able to gain my title of the Blue Knight Earl, not by my own power, but because of Lady Gladys and Banshee whose future I hope to live my life through. With you to support me, along with Paul, Raven, and everyone’s help, I was able to successfully play the role of the Blue Knight Earl. Therefore, I will no longer allow myself to dwell only in my personal revenge. I can no longer fight in such a self-destructive manner.”

Lydia was confused as Edgar tightly held her hand. Initially dull, after Edgar showed such strong determination, her unsuspecting heart was now intensely racing.

“I don't want to lose anything again. I would like to protect everyone all around us in the future, no longer letting anyone become a sacrifice. With the life Banshee gave me and the name of Earl, I would say these things are no longer a tool for my revenge. But more importantly, I hope to do my best for both fairies and humans to live a peaceful life... And it can only be done with you.”

“However, I don’t have the strength of the Blue Knight Earl. I can’t become a great fairy doctor.”

“Then, I will become a great Blue Knight Earl. Although I have no family related to fairy magic, Banshee also said that bloodline is not the most important. It is the Blue Knight Earl’s responsibility to defeat Prince. Therefore, I will defeat him. And I know that this will put you in danger. Despite that, I cannot see a

future where this fight would not be so. I only hope that I could still believe in the chance for a brighter future. So, I beg for you to listen to my one wayward request.”

Edgar never wavered his sincere eyes towards Lydia, which made her heart pound even faster, making her feel dizzy.

“I hope to better understand and firmly take responsibility, to be able to protect those I need to protect. Therefore, I hope that you will stay by my side forever.”

“Forever..... If it’s employment as the family consultant at the earl’s manor.....  
”

“No, until death do us part.”

Is this a third proposal?

The air was filled with his affection. Lydia nearly nodded, until she realized what he meant and desperately shook her head.

Edgar slightly downcast his eyes, seemingly appearing troubled as he thought.

“Well, can you at least tell me this. Do you like me to the point that is beyond being ordinary friends?”

“You are so full of yourself.”

Lydia blushed and lowered her head. Edgar’s hand never seemed forceful on her, so she always felt his words didn’t seem so convincing.

However, his attitude became stronger altogether.

“Lydia, no matter how kind you are, no matter how much you wish to be comforting, it is impossible to enter an ordinary male friend’s bedroom. I think you should still have that discretion.

“That, that is your stance....”

“However, at the time, you still conceded to my unreasonable demands.”

“I just did not know what to do.”

“Then I guess you, who is hopelessly good-hearted, must be very concerned for me who is a very flawed man. Therefore, you cannot leave me alone. In other words, I am the perfect one for you.”

Indeed, he did well to indulge in his favorable fallacies.

“I believe that this is not my unrequited love.”

“..... However, I am not going to marry you.”

“Then, you admit that you do like me?”

Lydia couldn't refuse, so she remained silent.

Because once she admitted to it, it would undoubtedly become an unrequited love for her.

Edgar took her shoulder and pulled her closer to him. Lydia felt his hand, touching her cheek, lift up her face. She didn't know how to react, and so she stiffly lowered her head.

“We agreed that when we came back, you would give me a kiss, should you not refuse?”

I completely forgot.

What should I do... ..?

This is not good! This time, I must say no! That's right. I need to be determined, or else.....

When Edgar saw Lydia's panicked expression, as if to comfort her he said:

“However, it is only until this kiss is something you look forward to. Otherwise, it'll lose its meaning. So before you promise to marry me, I'm willing to wait.”

Edgar's fingertips gently touched her lips.

Frightened, Lydia was taken aback. Immediately looking up, her eyes connected with Edgar's. His ash-mauve eyes narrowed as he smiled warmly at her. Lydia then felt a burst of inexplicable sadness, and she gazed at Edgar in tears.

Startled, Edgar quickly moved his finger away from her lips. But Lydia's tears kept streaming down, unable to stop crying as she continued to look at him full of tears.

“I'm sorry, please do not cry.”

“Why are you apologizing?”

“I don't know, but I feel that I always made you cry.”

Yes, it is all your fault.

“Enough already. You always promise these things regardless of the time.”

Although she said this, Edgar was tightly cradling her in his arms. Her head buried in his chest as she continued to cry. It felt almost as if Edgar was telling her: I love you.

“No matter how many times you deny me, I will never give up. Or otherwise,

my confession will just be a lie.”

Even if you say that now, one day you'll find out that the one you truly need is not me.

“..... Ermine truly wants to protect you. Her secret connection with Ulysses may only just be a misunderstanding.”

With Lydia's sudden change in subject, Edgar assumed she was only being shy.

“Well, I will certainly observe her for now.”

For Edgar's sake, Lydia didn't want Ermine's betrayal to be true. She sincerely hoped that such a thing wouldn't happen.

Lydia thought, how much pain would he have to suffer if he lost Ermine's presence?

Maybe Ermine was expecting to cut off all she had faced in her own past.

At the thought, Lydia alone felt a sense of guilt for Edgar.

Kelpie slept in the High Park at the end of the lake. At dawn, the lake began to crack as he opened his eyes, and the water waves flowed.

It seemed someone had broken into his territory

.

Kelpie decided to get rid of the intruder and quickly swam in the water. His black hair was swaying along the waves, as he quickly rushed to the other side of the party.

Eventually, the one who appeared before him was the girl --- Selkie. However, she still remained her human form in the water. Then again, she had no fur, so it was impossible to restore the appearance of a selkie. Basically, the short-haired woman who dressed in men's clothing turned to Kelpie at the bottom of the lake.

“So, it's you. What are you doing here?”

“I occasionally like to swim.”

“This is my turf.”

“This is shared by the public park.”

As a Selkie fairy, she was still too young, so she continued to speak in the tone that was human-like.

“Are you not going to find a way to separate Miss Lydia from Lord Edgar?”

“How can it be that simple. The engagement between the two is not easy to break off.”

“That means you failed then.”

“Shut up, do you wish to be eaten?”

Ermine eyed Kelpie carefully, but he had no intention of attacking her. So, she remained where she was.

She spoke again:

“I wanted to let you know, it is impossible for Miss Lydia to avoid Lord Edgar’s battle, because neither Lord Edgar nor the enemy could have expected the battle to have this tremendous change.”

“What do you mean?”

“Prince is coming to England. Since Lord Edgar is Ulysses’s enemy, he has no interest in anyone else but to constantly challenge Lord Edgar in one-on-one fights, in an attempt to humiliate him. However, Prince is different. Lord Edgar is very important, so he will try to lay his hands on him.”

“Who the hell is on which side?”

Ermine didn’t answer, but in a dull, flat voice, she continued:

“There is only one way to protect Miss Lydia from Prince’s destruction. It is to help Ulysses.”

“What? Don't make me laugh, I don't take commands!”

Kelpie had never been so angry in his entire life. He thought, I detest that boy named Ulysses, and you’re asking me to help him? Don’t make me laugh to death!

“Ulysses would not want anything to interfere with his plans. Therefore, when you compromise with him, you can come up with the right conditions to protect Miss Lydia. It’ll be a wise decision to think it over.”

Ermine then gently swam upstream to the surface and disappeared from Kelpie’s sight.

# Credits

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